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UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK 2023-2027

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20 MAY 2022

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

UNSDCF 2023-2027 MONGOLIA

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DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

The Government of Mongolia and the United Nations are committed to working together to achieve the national development priorities articulated in Vision-2050, the long-term development policy of Mongolia, the Sustainable Development Goals and other internationally agreed development and human rights goals and obligations.

This United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) builds on our successful cooperation in the past and will guide our work from 2023 to 2027. The collective results of the UNSDCF will contribute to Mongolia becoming a prosperous country characterized by inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development, healthy and safe environment, and a cohesive society based on rule of law and human rights.

In signing hereafter, the cooperating partners endorse this United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2023-2027) and underscore their joint commitment towards the achievement of its results.

On behalf of the Government of Mongolia

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Minister for Foreign Affairs

Date: 20 May 2022

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H.E. Javkhlan Bold

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Date: May 22, 2022

On behalf of the United Nations

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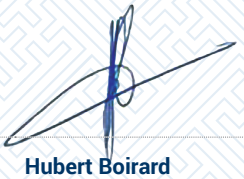

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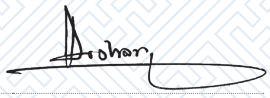

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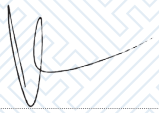

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ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
APF	Asia and Pacific Forum on Human rights institutions
APTA	Asia Pacific Trade Agreement
CAREC	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CITA	Communications and Information Technology Authority (of Mongolia)
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of OECD
EU	European Union
FACE	Fund Authorization and Certificate of Expenditures
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHGs	Green House Gases
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
GTG	Gender Theme Group
HACT	Harmonised Cash Transfers
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRTG	Human Rights Theme Group
IBCs	Issue-based Coalitions
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	International Financial Institution
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IT	Information Technology
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency

JSC	Joint Steering Committee
JWP	Joint Work Plan
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MAF	Management and Accountability Framework
MCSD	Multistakeholder Council for Sustainable Development
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MICS	Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NCD	Non-communicable Disease
NCGE	National Committee on Gender Equality
NCSD	National Council for Sustainable Development
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHRCM	National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia
NSO	National Statistics Office
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OMT	Operations Management Team
OPD	Organization of Persons with Disabilities
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PRPD	Partnerships of the Rights of the Persons with Disability
PSEA	Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
PUNOs	Participating UN Organisations
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
RMP	Resource Mobilization and Partnerships
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDSN	Sustainable Development Solutions Network
SDV	Sustainable Development Vision
SWAP	Gender SWAP score card
TIKA	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
TWG	Thematic Working Groups
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCG	United Nations Communications Group

UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VAW	Violence against Women
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Executive Summary

The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF 2023-2027) represents the joint strategic planning framework for collaboration between the United Nations and the Government of Mongolia in the next five years. This was formulated based on multiple consultations with the Government, the Parliament, civil society, private sector, banking sector, development partners, and the UN system (represented by resident and non-resident entities). The consultations built a shared development vision for the country to guide the UN's work and contributed to the formulation of key national priorities for the UNSDCF following the theory of change approach.

The UNSDCF is closely aligned with the national development agenda as articulated in the Vision 2050 with nine overarching strategic priorities to be implemented in three phases, the country's international commitments under the 2030 Agenda and international human rights obligations. Mongolia has shown strong commitment to the 2030 Agenda and has adopted the UN Secretary General's call for the "Decade of Action" and has set up institutional mechanism in the form of the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) at the Government level and the Multistakeholder Council for Sustainable Development (MCSD) at the Parliament level to review the SDG progress and steer the alignment of national development with the SDGs. The UN system in Mongolia has been a trusted partner of the Government for over 60 years cooperating with the country to achieve its sustainable development.

The country has made significant progress in all three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. It has made rapid economic growth and considerable progress in achieving the SDGs in health, education and social protection.

Mongolia now is a middle-income country with HDI value of 0.737 (2019) which places it in the high human development category. Mongolia is a vibrant parliamentary democracy and holds regular, free, and fair elections. The democratic institutions and legislative frameworks are in place to ensure rule of law and protect human rights. The country has relatively free media and civil society.

Yet, many development challenges remain as identified in the Voluntary National Review, UN Common Country Analysis, and the Strategic Prioritisation Workshop. Mongolia's heavy dependence on the export of coal and minerals makes its economy vulnerable to volatile commodity prices. The economic growth, though rapid, has been fluctuating and undiversified. Poverty reduction and employment creation have not been commensurate with the economic growth. Policy-making is not often evidence-based and lacks coherence. The governance institutions are perceived to be less accountable and transparent. Migration governance too has gaps.

Climate change and air pollution are key factors that threaten sustainable development in Mongolia. Quality and equity outcomes of investment in human capital (health and nutrition, education and skills, and social protection) are uneven. Despite progress towards social inclusion, many population groups remain excluded or are at risk of being excluded. The COVID-19 pandemic heightened the pre-existing vulnerabilities of the marginalised groups especially women and men with inter-sectional vulnerabilities, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, ger dwellers, informal workers, victims of trafficking, and unregistered internal migrants, among others.

For the above challenges to be addressed, Mongolia will need to make its policy-making more coherent, integrated, and evidence-informed; economy, institutions, eco-systems and people more resilient to shocks (economic, environmental and pandemic), remodelling its economy towards green and diversified; governance institutions more transparent, accountable and participatory; and make progress towards "leaving no one behind" by eliminating inequalities in all forms including gender inequalities and other intersectional inequalities facing the vulnerable and excluded groups.

Resources to address these priorities will need to be mobilised by prudent fiscal management, improved public expenditure efficiency, private sector partnerships to tap SDG-aligned financial instruments, and regional / global and south-south cooperation.

Building on the progress made so far and informed by the development challenges and theory of change described above and keeping in mind that "leaving no one behind" is the central approach to the UNSDCF, and quick recovery from the impact of COVID-19 an urgent need, the UN and the Government of Mongolia in collaboration and consultation with other stakeholders identified the following overarching vision, three strategic priorities and four outcomes.

The vision was articulated through stakeholder consultations and is intricately linked with the national priorities under Vision-2050 and SDGs (see table in section 2.2).

VISION

By 2030, all people in Mongolia over their life course benefit from shared prosperity characterized by inclusive, resilient and sustainable development, as well as healthy and safe environment; and thrive in a cohesive society based on rule of law and human rights.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Human Development and Well-being

Outcome 1

By 2027, people in urban and rural areas, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, equally realize their full human potential and benefit from inclusive, rights-based, gender- and shock-responsive health and nutrition, education, social protection, WASH and other services

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Green, Inclusive and Sustainable Growth

Outcome 2

By 2027, the Mongolian economy is more diversified, innovative, productive, inclusive, green and geographically balanced enabling decent livelihoods, especially for women and youth, building 21st century skills, and promoting low-carbon development

Outcome 3

By 2027, communities and eco-systems in Mongolia are more resilient to climate change with improved capacity for evidence-informed and gender-responsive sustainable natural resource and environmental management and disaster risk reduction

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

People-centred Governance, Rule of Law and Human rights

Outcome 4

By 2027, policy-making and implementation in Mongolia is more gender-responsive, participatory, coherent, evidence-informed and SDG-aligned; governance institutions at all levels are transparent and accountable; and people, especially the marginalised groups, have access to justice and rule of law for full realization of human rights

The UN system in Mongolia will contribute to the achievement of these three strategic priorities and four outcomes through technical assistance, capacity building, innovative pilot initiatives, policy advice, leveraging partnerships, catalysing development finance, and social mobilisation, among others. The UN Country Team reviewed its configuration, including business models and capacities of contributing UN entities, to align itself with the UNSDCF for effective delivery of the results. By leveraging its expertise, the UN system in Mongolia will contribute to accelerating SDG progress through evidence-informed approaches and in line with the principles of human rights-based approach to social, economic, and environmental development, "leaving no one behind", gender equality and women's empowerment, sustainability, accountability, and resilience. Cognisant of the importance of regional cooperation in country's development, UN will support Mongolia in its engagement with regional institutions and frameworks, for the country to benefit from, and contribute to, regional expertise, resources and programmes. The UNSDCF will be implemented under the overall coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Government Coordinating Authority) through the mechanism of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC), highest decision-making and oversight body, co-chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the UN Resident Coordinator. The JSC will review the progress against the planned results and recommend course corrections, as necessary.

The relationship between the UN and the Government of Mongolia will be governed by the legal provisions as in the legal annex at the end of this document. The UNSDCF will be operationalized through the Joint Work Plans (JWPs) and monitored through the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan prepared for the entire duration of the programme and reviewed from time to time. The implementation of the UNSDCF will be further supported by the Results Groups, the Theme Groups, and UN Programme Support Groups all to be guided by the UN Country Team. The Cooperation Framework will undergo a mandatory final independent evaluation in the penultimate year of its implementation.

Herders' summer camp. Photo credit: Ch. Batzaya

1

CHAPTER

COUNTRY PROGRESS TOWARDS 2030 AGENDA

1.1 Country context

Mongolia has made significant progress in all three dimensions of sustainable development prior to the pandemic: economic, social and environmental. It has made rapid economic growth and significant progress in achieving the SDGs in health, education and social protection thereby improving the living conditions for majority of people in the country. Mongolia now is a middle-income country with HDI value of 0.737 (2019) which places it in the high human development category. Mongolia is a vibrant parliamentary democracy and holds regular, free, and fair elections. The democratic institutions and legislative frameworks are in place to ensure rule of law and protect human rights. The country has relatively free media and civil society. Mongolia has ratified major human and labour rights instruments and cooperates with the human rights mechanisms. The country is also signatory to a number of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). Mongolia's response to COVID-19 has also been exceptional in terms of containing the number of cases and fatalities in 2020 and 2021, and providing stimulus packages as well as vaccination to the public.

Yet, many development challenges remain as identified in the Voluntary National Review, UN Common Country Analysis and in the Strategic Prioritisation Workshop. Mongolia's heavy dependence on the export of coal and minerals makes its economy vulnerable to volatile commodity prices. The economic growth, though rapid, has been fluctuating. Poverty reduction and employment creation have not been commensurate with the economic growth. More than a quarter of the population still lives in poverty and situations of vulnerability, is food insecure and the most vulnerable groups continue to face barriers in accessing social services. Development also reveals wide regional differences between rural and urban areas. The economy lacks diversification and has high levels of informality. Mongolia's public debt burden is relatively high, and growing, and fiscal prudence weak[1]. Pervasive corruption, lack of policy coherence and coordination among government institutions, weak accountability and gaps in institutional and human resources capacities are some of the governance challenges. Climate change, environmental degradation and uncontrolled urbanisation fuelled by rural-to-urban migration pose additional challenges to sustainable development. Air pollution is posing serious health hazards as also non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Tsaatan girl riding a reindeer. Tsaatan, or Duka people are one of the ethnic minorities, herding reindeers in the northern Mongolia. Photo credit: Ch. Batzaya

[1] As per the World Bank Mongolia Economic Update (April 2022) Mongolia's public debt rose from 81 percent of GDP in early 2021 to 92 percent of GDP at the end of 2021. According to IMF Article IV Consultation, untargeted fiscal and financial forbearance measures, and growing debt burden have increased the country's macro financial vulnerabilities. On the other hand, a recent focus on COVID 19 response has impacted Mongolia's ability to meet its obligations towards Sustainable Development Goals and its co-financing requirements in recent years.

Quality and equity outcomes of investment in human capital (health and nutrition, education and skills, and social protection) have been uneven. Despite progress towards social inclusion, many population groups remain excluded or are at risk of being excluded. The COVID-19 pandemic heightened the pre-existing vulnerabilities of the marginalised groups especially women, girls and men with inter-sectional vulnerabilities, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, ger dwellers, informal workers, trafficking victims, and unregistered migrants, among others. Most of them face overlapping vulnerabilities. Border closures with China has affected import of goods, export of coal and commodities, and increased the transport costs pushing inflation up reaching 14 percent by the end of 2021 particularly affecting those living in poverty. Mongolia's exposure as it imports 90% fuel from Russia, is leading to increasing prices and inflation, with a risk of higher debt burden and the cost of SDG financing, more generally.

1.2 National vision for sustainable development

Mongolia was amongst the first countries to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Soon after the UN General Assembly's adoption of the SDGs in 2015, the Parliament of Mongolia approved Mongolia's long-term strategic Sustainable Development Vision (SDV) 2030 in February 2016. This long-term policy was revised by preparing the Vision-2050 which was approved by the Parliament in May 2020 to set a new direction for Mongolia for the next 30 years

The overarching vision for 2050 is: "By 2050, Mongolia shall become a leading Asian country in terms of its social development, economic growth and its citizens' quality of life." The Vision-2050 has nine overarching strategic priorities[2] that largely align with SDGs and envisage that Mongolia will "develop into a country that respects the roots, statehood and heritage; upholds the shared national values; supports the progressive advances of the humanity; protects the planet and pristine nature; builds a safe and humane society; fosters a democratic and just governance; sustains a self-sufficient economy with benefits equally accessible to each family and citizen; with healthy, educated, patriotic, versatile, intelligent and creative citizen."

The Vision-2050 will be operationalized through medium term plans in three phases that are: Phase-1 2020-2030; Phase-2 2031-2040; and Phase-3 2041-2050.

Phase-1 coincides with the Decade of Action and ends with the 2030 Agenda, but without a clear road map to achieve SDGs by 2030. According to the newly amended Development Policy, Planning and Management Law, adopted by the Parliament in May 2020, the operationalization of the Vision 2050 will take place through (1) seven medium-term, 10-yearly thematic programmes (2) 5-yearly integrated policy (general guideline), (3) short-term 4-yearly Government Action Plan (GAP) and (4) the integrated annual development plans.

[2] These are: 1. Shared national values 2. Human development 3. Quality of life and middle-class 4. Economy 5. Governance 6. Green development 7. Safe and secure society 8. Regional and local development and 9. Ulaanbaatar and satellite cities.

The country has established institutional mechanisms to oversee the implementation of the SDGs including the SDGs Sub-committee under the Social Policy Standing Committee established by the Parliament in 2015 and restructured Parliament sub-committee under the Economic Policy Standing Committee. The Parliament also recently established the Multi-stakeholder Council for Sustainable Development (MCSD) to be led by the sub-committee under the Economic Policy Standing Committee and involving different stakeholders including the respective government organizations, UN, IFIs, key development partners, representatives of CSOs and private sector to oversee, provide guidance and possibly leverage resources for the SDGs implementation in Mongolia. At the Government level, the Prime Minister of Mongolia reconstituted National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) in January 2021 to coordinate and make executive decisions in SDGs implementation in the country. The UN Resident Coordinator is now full and the only international member of the NCSD. The NCSD is chaired by the Prime Minister.

Mongolia's first Voluntary National Review (VNR) of the SDGs progress presented at the UN High Level Political Forum in 2019 acknowledged that SDGs can only be achieved if SDGs are mainstreamed into the national and sub-national development policies, programmes, and budgets. Although Mongolia has initiated the SDG localisation process, the alignment of national and sub-national priorities and targets, integrating SDGs into the medium and short-term policies and their implementation, monitoring and reporting would still need improvement. SDG councils have also been set up at local level (Aimag centres and Soums), which may help in accelerating integration, localization, and achieving SDGs.

Launch of the Multistakeholder Council for Sustainable Development at the Parliament of Mongolia, 23 March 2022.
Photo credit: UNRCO Mongolia

1.3 SDG Progress

According to Sustainable Development Report 2021[3], Mongolia ranked 106 out of 165 countries with a country score of 63.8 compared to the regional average of 65.7 (East and South Asia). The country has made progress on many SDGs such as poverty reduction and quality education, while moderately improving in gender equality, health, decent work, and clean energy, but lagging behind in removing hunger, sustainable cities, infrastructure, climate action, life on land and peace and institutions. Lack of disaggregated data is an impediment in measuring SDG progress with accuracy for some vulnerable groups.

People [SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

At 27.8 percent in 2020, poverty level (headcount ratio) is lower than 38.8 percent in 2010 but reveals sharp differences between rural (30.5 percent) and urban (26.5 percent) areas. Poverty is highly associated with the economic status and the number of children in the household. But compared to 2016 (29.6 percent), the decline in poverty has been modest and post-pandemic poverty may have actually gone up thus reversing the past gains made in this SDG. Although the social protection system has high coverage and is relatively well-funded (some of it out of IFI loans), but there are issues about its targeting, efficiency and fiscal sustainability. **[SDG 1]**.

Proportion of stunted children declined from 24.6 percent to 9.4 percent between 2000 and 2018, but obesity is on the rise, especially among poorer, urban children. Rural migrant families in ger areas are most vulnerable to food insecurity **[SDG 2]**. Mongolia has achieved significant progress in reducing the level of hunger, but a large proportion continues to face varying levels of food insecurity and the progress on reducing food insecurity has slowed down in recent years. On health indicators, the under-five mortality rate decreased from 42.4 per 1000 live births in 2000 to 16.1 in 2019. The infant mortality rate decreased from 32.8 per 1000 live births to 13.3 over the same period. The maternal mortality ratio decreased from 155 per 100,000 live births in 2000 to 45 in 2017 thus already achieving the Goal **[SDG 3]**.

On the other hand, there are growing threats to public health, particularly in the area of nutrition[4]. Learning outcomes are not commensurate with the number of schooling years[5]. There are vast differences in enrolment in pre-school education with enrolment rate of 48 percent for the poorest quintile and 69 percent for the richest **[SDG 4]**. Gender equality is making progress yet proportion of women in parliament (17.3 percent) has not increased and remains lower than global average. Women spent more time (19.1 percent) on unpaid domestic chores and care work than men (8 percent)[6]. Gender-based violence, especially exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, human trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and girls, and low female labour force participation rates are among the key concerns **[SDG 5]**.

[3] Sachs, J., Kroll, C., Lafortune, G., Fuller, G., Woelm, F. (2021) The Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals: Sustainable Development Report 2021. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[4] In 2016, it was estimated that globally Mongolia incurred the second highest national fraction of age-standardized cardiovascular mortality attributable to dietary risk factors—a situation stemming from the country's historic dependence on animal-source foods, poor dietary diversity, growing consumption of foods that are high in refined starches, sugar, fats and processed foods, and an underdeveloped agriculture sector. Overall, transitioning to sustainable food systems will require technological innovation, strategic use of economic incentives, cohesive and participatory governance, and behavioural changes.

[5] Only 44.4 percent of children in grades 2/3 could achieve minimum reading proficiency levels and only 33.6 percent minimum numeracy skills as per MICS

[6] The World Bank. (n.d.) Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, male (% of 24-hour day)-Mongolia. Retrieved from https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SG.TIM.UWRK.MA?locations=MN

Prosperity [SDGs 7, 8, 9, 10]

Since 2009, the annual GDP growth rate has fluctuated between a contraction of 1.3 percent (2009)[7] and growth of 17.3 percent (2011) due to volatility of the economy which is heavily dependent on export of coal and minerals. The country faces boom and bust cycles. Unemployment rate is high especially among the youth, 17.9 percent compared to 7 percent overall. Mongolian economy is characterised by high informal employment. In 2019, 25.6 percent of working men were in informal employment, compared to 19.8 per cent for working women[8]. Share of youth (15-24 years) not in education, employment or training (NEET) was 19.7 percent in 2020. More women among youth are likely to be in NEET category (21.7 percent) than men (17.8 percent)[9]. **[SDG 8]**. The economy is undiversified and lags in promoting innovation but is advancing now through e-Mongolia and the Digital Nation strategy. Mongolia spent 0.55 percent of GDP on R&D in 2020. In Logistics Performance Index, it ranks 130 out of 160 (2018) and due to its terrain and sparse population, faces high cost of infrastructural development **[SDG 9]**. Inequality as measured by Gini Index was moderate at 32.7 in 2018 but this does not capture inequalities which might have gone up during the pandemic or non-income inequalities **[SDG 10]**. Access to energy is near universal but it is largely thermal and the share of renewable energy in total final energy consumption was very low at 3.4 percent (in 2018). There is high inequality in access to clean energy and poorer rural households are further behind in the use of clean (non-solid) fuel **[SDG 7]**.

Planet [SDGs 6, 11, 12, 13, 15]

Mongolia is highly vulnerable to climate change and climate related disasters like droughts, floods, windstorms and dzuds which take a heavy toll on livelihoods, infrastructure, and livestock. The new conditional NDC target of reducing GHG emissions by 27.2 percent requires robust action on the ground and significant amount of financing **[SDG 13]**. Water resources are deteriorating, and glaciers and permafrost are melting. The quality of water is also deteriorating due to pollution from livestock discharges, hazardous chemicals and materials used in mining, lack of wastewater treatment infrastructure in local provinces, and inefficient treatment of waste water in urban centers. Considering that the demand for water may triple in next two decades, these trends are very concerning **[SDG 6]**. Ulaanbaatar is already hosting more than half of the country's population. Unabated urbanization, migration from rural areas, the rise of peri-urban informal settlements (ger districts), high level of air pollution, caused mostly by emissions from coal-based power plants, and inefficient waste management are posing challenges to the goal of sustainable cities and communities **[SDG 11]**. Unsustainable consumption and production and resource use inefficiencies are causing biodiversity loss and increasing vulnerability of ecosystems **[SDG 12]**. Much of land in Mongolia is subject to degradation in varying degrees. Overgrazing of pastures due to unmanaged pastoral livestock, unsustainable agricultural practices, inadequate investment in water conservation and green development, and agriculture-based processing industry may jeopardise the country's global commitments. Unsustainable land use has driven biodiversity loss and deforestation **[SDG 15]**.

[7] Not counting 2020, when the economy contracted by 4.56 percent due to the COVID-19.
[8] ILO, MLSP & Research Institute of Labour and Social Protection (2021) The state of informal employment in Mongolia: survey report.
[9] The World Bank. (n.d.) Share of youth not in education, employment or training, total (% of youth population)-Mongolia. Retrieved from https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.NEET.ZS?locations=MN

Peace [SDG 16]

Since the 1990s, Mongolia has experienced smooth transition to peaceful democracy following uninterrupted elections. The country has acceded to core human rights treaties and has set up institutional mechanism to meet the commitments under international norms and standards. Mongolia has abolished death penalty and has legal protection in place for human rights defenders. Despite progress, violence against women and children, trafficking in persons, violation of child rights when dealing with children in conflict with law, high levels of corruption, long period of politicised civil service, and social norms and attitudes against migrants, LGBTIQ, persons with disabilities, among others, are areas of concern.

Partnerships [SDG 17]

Mongolia faces high and rising public debt and a challenging fiscal situation. As noted earlier, public debt as at the end of 2021 stood at 92 percent of GDP. There has been significant drop in FDI as the country is perceived by investors to be a high-risk destination. As a landlocked country, Mongolia partners in a number of regional infrastructure and trade initiatives including CAREC, China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor, and Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement. The country is well-positioned to strengthen its cooperation with non-traditional donors and stakeholders and develop a robust south-south and triangular cooperation strategy. Potential of digitalisation for boosting digital trade and providing services is not fully leveraged. Incomplete SDG нцationalisation, integration and internalization in policy making, non-availability and use of disaggregated data for evidence-based decision-making on SDGs implementation, monitoring and reporting are major challenges as is lack of coordination and policy coherence and integration.

The Prime Minister of Mongolia, H.E Khurelsukh Ukhnaa addressed at the celebration of the 75h anniversary of the United Nations. 2020. Photo credit: UNRCO Mongolia

1.4 Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

Weak institutional capacities and a financing gap are the prime challenges towards achievement of SDGs. This manifests in inadequate and inefficient resource allocation for evidence-based, gender-responsive, integrated, and coherent policy planning and implementation. The enforcement of merit principle in civil service recruitment and hiring remains challenging.

Public administration lacks institutional memory due to high turnover and its accountability, transparency, and responsiveness towards citizens. need to be solidified. Corruption is present in many sectors and undermines people's trust and confidence in institutions, despite increase in resolved corruption cases by the courts and Government's actions such as establishment of a national committee on transitioning to e-governance and building public service without red tape and corruption headed by the Prime Minister (2021) and digitalization of procurement, among others.

Despite overall strong statistical capacity in Mongolia[10], the lack of robust disaggregated databases, as noted in the Voluntary National Review (2019) report, and focus on outcome level results also hampers evidence-based policymaking and thus progress towards SDGs. Lack of reliable demographic data disaggregated by sex, ethnicity, disability status, migration pattern etc. is an impediment in policy making for vulnerable population groups who may be left behind or are at risk of being left behind.

Though the Government of Mongolia has shown full commitment and ownership of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, the process of SDG nationalisation and mainstreaming through internalization and integration of SDGs in national and sub-national policies and plans is still to be achieved.

Lack of policy coherence and coordination in decision-making also impedes progress towards the 2030 Agenda. Government often works in insular manner and lacks a cross-government and whole of government approach. Mutually reinforcing policies and synergies are often not leveraged across social, economic, and environmental areas. This is a major gap considering that the SDGs are interlinked and require a more integrated approach. Development priorities are often not based on solid, comprehensive, and evidence-based analysis and many of development agenda are driven by politics.

Climate change and associated extreme weather events can potentially reverse the SDG gains if not addressed in time. Climate change and the strain on natural resources could have negative impact on jobs, migration, health, education, agriculture, and rural-urban balanced development. The capacity for the implementation of the climate change commitments and addressing the country's preparedness to disaster risks is weak. Climate change and environmental degradation is a cross-cutting challenge in forefront of the entire 2030 Agenda.

[10] The World Bank (2020). Mongolia's Statistical Capacity Indicator score at 92.2 was higher than the average for East Asia and the Pacific region. Retrieved from https://datatopics.worldbank.org/statisticalcapacity/scidashboard.aspx

Undiversified economy, dependent on capital-intensive extractives industry, stagnant employment, high economic informality, substantial value chain inefficiencies, skills mismatch, low productivity, wage inequality, and poor technical and vocational education system are also hindrances in accelerating SDG progress particularly hurting the young, women, and vulnerable groups.

Investment climate for private investment is not conducive enough and investors still perceive Mongolia as a high-risk environment as evident from the significant drop in FDI due to high public debt levels, frequently changing regulations, inconsistent and incoherent policies and uneven access to regulatory information, licenses, and finance.

Although overall investment in health, education and social protection in Mongolia compares well with the peers, the quality of outcomes is uneven. NCDs are emerging as a major health risk as also pollution-induced health risk. There are coverage, equity, and quality concerns about early childhood education services. There is a need for greater efficiency in public expenditure to maintain sustainability in social services.

Social norms, gender stereotypes and prejudices hinder the realization of rights of women and those of other vulnerable groups and impede the achievement of inclusive and sustainable growth.

Opportunities

The country is rich in natural resources, including coal and minerals. Mongolia uses its extractives to fuel economic growth. However, extractives sector has not been employment-intensive or poverty-reducing[11]. There is a need to turn the natural wealth into human capital and well-being. Given scarce water resources and deteriorating environment, this would require adoption of sustainable mining practices and ensuring more prudent use of revenues from mineral processing to establish a fund to smoothen the boom-and-bust cycles and for investing in human capital and economic diversification that would benefit larger numbers.

The country is passing through a demographic change with high bulge of youth cohort in population distribution. It is an opportunity to invest in youth health, education, and skills to boost sustainable growth and enabling their participation in social, economic and political life of the country thus realising youth rights and reaping the youth dividend. This will also reduce the youth population (15-24 years) not in education, employment, or training (NEET).

Women are highly educated and present in all sectors, however, not yet sufficiently at decision making level. Their contribution to sustainable development in the economic, environmental, and social areas should be leveraged more effectively utilizing their extensive knowledge and abilities to advance the country's development.

The country could also benefit from increased engagement of its diaspora that has reached social and economic significance. Reverse migration from urban to rural areas could also potentially alleviate the consequences of rapid and uncontrolled urbanization.

[11] Mongolia's mining sector accounts for 24 percent of GDP, 89 percent of exports, 26 percent of the Government revenue and 73 percent of total FDI. Retrieved from https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/infographic/2020/10/30/mines-and-minds. However, it accounts for only 3.6 percent of total employment. Retrieved from https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/environment-and-development-economics/article/effects-of-ups-and-downs-of-the-mongolian-mining-sector/B4

Though the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 has been serious, this also offers an opportunity to build forward better, mainstreaming green and inclusive growth, and digital transformation in the Decade of Action to accelerate SDG progress.

There is also an opportunity to integrate with the region and beyond through trade and establishing economic corridor. This can be achieved by investing in sustainable infrastructure, and diversification of its economy and shift away from dependence on extractives. This would also open up markets in the region and beyond for the Mongolian exports and help Mongolia overcome the disadvantages associated with its landlocked status.

Domestic private sector has vastly expanded in all key sectors in Mongolia and offers an opportunity in providing jobs and market-responsive skills and can contribute to structural transformation and economic diversification. To tap this opportunity, simultaneous improvement in the access to finance by SMEs and trade facilitation reform would be needed, among others.

Growth in e-commerce provides international trade opportunities including new market opportunities for Mongolia, and other landlocked developing countries, with technical assistance on developing the necessary legal framework and improving digital infrastructure and digital inclusion[12].

The Government's efforts to digitalize the nation through the Mongolia Digital Nation Strategy is an opportunity to provide needed public services to the most vulnerable, and also diversify the economy to be more service-based, engaging the private sector.

Political stability, peace and a functioning democracy are also the opportunities to be built upon just as its nuanced diplomacy, despite the country's geo-political context, is a strength for the country's swift recovery from the pandemic and future sustainable development.

UN Resident Coordinator Tapan Mishra visits the Youth Development Center in Zavkhan aimag, 2022.
Photo credit: UNRCO Mongolia

[12] See Ministerial Declaration submitted by Mongolia on behalf of the LLDC group to the WTO. Retrieved from https://docs.wto.org/dol2fe/Pages/SS/directdoc.aspx?filename=q:/WT/GC/237.pdf&Open=True

Youth raised their voice at the peaceful protest, 2022 Photo credit: B. Ireedui / Noise Art Media

1.5 International Human Rights Commitments

Mongolia has ratified eight out of nine core human rights treaties. It did not ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. The country cooperates with the human rights mechanisms and bodies. It has accepted 170 out of 190 UPR recommendations (3rd cycle, March 2021) and 90 percent of CEDAW recommendations (as of 2020) and has prepared Action Plans to implement these recommendations with UN support. Mongolia has established the National Commission on Gender Equality and brought gender equality under the purview of the Prime Minister.

The country is taking steps to strengthen the National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia (NHRCM) and has established a national mechanism defining the role of the NHRCM in torture prevention even though this mechanism is not yet fully operational. The Mongolian Parliament has adopted a new law for human rights defenders, making it the first country in Asia to provide a framework of protection for people who speak out on human rights concerns and violations. Mongolia abolished the death penalty in 2015, a step that earned the country global praise. Based on the UPR recommendations, the country is working to develop a National Action Plan to implement the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Furthermore, Mongolia has supported the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) in 2018. The country has also enacted laws and set up institutional mechanism to implement child rights within the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) including those regarding horse racing, domestic violence, education of children with disabilities, and corporal punishment, among others.

However, some human rights concerns remain. These mainly relate to violence against women, discriminatory attitudes, marginalization of vulnerable groups including persons with disabilities and older persons, large cases of abuse, violence against children, and also violations of human rights linked to environmental degradation. Mongolia suffers from heavy air, soil, and water pollution in its urban areas and during the long cold season, air pollution levels in Ulaanbaatar are among the highest in the world jeopardising right to safe drinking water, right to health and right to an adequate standard of living13. Although freedom of expression, peaceful assembly are guaranteed against interference and restrictions by the government, some civil society actions and peaceful demonstrations are interrupted by police actions. There has also been the issue of the push back in civic space, including digital civic space, during COVID-19 pandemic.

[13] The United Nations in Mongolia. (2021). Common Country Analysis – Mongolia. p. 47

1.6 Leave No One Behind

Leaving no one behind (LNOB) is a key guiding principle of the 2030 Agenda derived from the normative standards and human rights. It represents commitment made by Member States in 2015 to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine the potential of individuals and of humanity.

With a view to fulfil the promise of leaving no one behind, the Common Country Analysis identified a number of population groups in Mongolia that are excluded or are at risk of being excluded. Those with multiple intersectional vulnerabilities and dimensions of exclusion are at higher risk of being excluded. In identifying the LNOB groups, CCA used multiple sources including focus group discussions with LNOB groups identified in VNR, socio-economic response plan for COVID-19, international human rights reports, and ILO reports, among others.

The population groups identified as excluded or at risk of being excluded are:

At the root of exclusion is the economic growth model based on capital-intensive, and foreign investment-led volatile extractive industries thereby crowding out diversification leading to high unemployment. Lack of jobs and income opportunities especially in rural provinces that also face climatic risks and double jeopardy of degradation of and weak access to natural resources; poor design, coverage and equity outcomes of investment in human capital; and gaps in governance institutions that do not adequately uphold the rights of vulnerable groups.

There are many other vertical factors that act as drivers of exclusion of the various population groups. These include: prevailing social norms, negative gender stereotypes and entrenched discriminatory attitudes towards women; limited capacity of duty bearers and lack of disaggregated data to formulate and implement policies that would benefit LNOB groups; unwillingness of victims to report crime; lack of participation by the rights holders and inadequate reflection of their perspectives in policies and programmes; gaps in capacity of service providers especially in rural and remote locations; limited budget to provide victim support and outreach; and low level of trust and cooperation between the policy makers and the civil society representing vulnerable groups.

2

CHAPTER

UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT TO THE 2030 AGENDA

2.1 Overarching Theory of Change

In the Decade of Action, Mongolia like the rest of the world, is facing challenges of building forward better while responding to the pandemic and putting the country back on the path to SDG progress which faced recent reversals due to a focus in policies towards COVID-19 response. Heightened inequalities, economic downturn, and worsening climate change suggest that a business-as-usual approach to development will not work. The path to 2030 is shaped by developments and trends that are inherently more complex, unpredictable, with impacts the world has never seen before and require policies geared towards recovery from the pandemic.

The overarching theory of change outlines the change pathways that would accelerate the country's progress towards the 2030 Agenda and achieve the shared Government of Mongolia-UN vision where "By 2030, all people in Mongolia over their life course benefit from shared prosperity characterized by inclusive, resilient and sustainable development, as well as healthy and safe environment; and thrive in a cohesive society based on rule of law and human rights".

The vision above will be achieved if there is sufficient investment in human capital development contributing to human well-being; if there is green, sustainable, and inclusive economic growth integrating climate action, sustainable natural resource management and disaster risk reduction in the development strategy; and if there is people-centred governance, rule of law, and full realization of human rights for women and men equally. These are the strategic priorities for the UNSDCF which are interlinked reflecting the integrated nature of SDGs (see section 2.2).

Youth studying tailoring at the Polytechnic College in Dalanzadgad, Umnugobi. Photo credit: UNFPA Mongolia/B.Khash-Erdene

Under the strategic priorities, there are four outcomes which together represent the following changes that need to take place through policies, programmes and institutional mechanisms for Mongolia to achieve the development vision:

Social services (healthcare, nutrition, education including early childhood education, WASH, and social protection) are more efficient, inclusive, equitable, gender- and shock-responsive.

Economic growth is more diversified and innovative, follows low-carbon pathways, creates more decent jobs, and labour markets offer matching skills that enhance employability with focus on women, youth, and marginalised people.

Natural resources are more sustainably used while addressing the climate change, biodiversity degradation and air pollution, promoting 'green' and circular economy and building resilience of communities, especially the herders, to disaster risks (such as dzuds).

A transparent, corruption-free and accountable governance system is in place, at national and local levels, for people to enjoy efficient services, human rights, access to justice providing for dignified and empowered lives for women and men.

Improved mechanisms and processes are in place to effectively prevent and respond to violence against women and children, prevent and respond to human trafficking, reduce women's burden of unpaid care work, and promote women's participation in economic, social and political life, including at the highest levels.

More independent and impartial media and civil society is present that act as effective watchdogs holding authorities accountable.

Inequalities are addressed across regions, rural and urban areas, social and economic classes and gender.

There is greater policy coherence promoted through evidence-informed decision-making, better coordination, and disaggregated data availability and usage.

Regional cooperation is strengthened to address trans-boundary dimensions of development challenges especially those relating to cross-border movement of goods and persons.

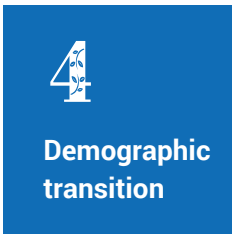
More preventive approach to sustainable development is adopted in view of challenges associated with migration, geopolitics of being economically dependent on China and Russia, and social conflict over natural resource management, and corruption.

The change pathways above will be supplemented by cross-cutting enablers that need to be activated for full realisation of the 2030 Agenda:

Bridging digital divide and leveraging digital transformation, especially for the most vulnerable

Building multi-stakeholder partnerships to unlock additional financing and for technical assistance/ capacity building

Catalysing adequate development finance including through innovative means



Fostering cross-border cooperation to accelerate progress towards sustainable development

Managing demographic transition to meet the aspirations of the young, and balancing urban and rural development

Effectively combating harmful social norms, prejudices towards vulnerable groups, and negative gender stereotypes affecting women

Expanding availability of disaggregated data and promoting its use for decision-making

The Theory of Change

VISION: **By 2030, all people in Mongolia over their life course benefit from shared prosperity characterized by inclusive, resilient and sustainable development, as well as healthy and safe environment; and thrive in a cohesive society based on rule of law and human rights.**

STRATEGIC PRIORITY-1
Human Development and Well-being

OUTCOME 1:

By 2027, people in urban and rural areas, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, equally realize their full human potential and benefit from inclusive, rights-based, gender- and shock-responsive health and nutrition, education, social protection, WASH and other services

Output 1.1: The capacities are in place to promote integrated healthcare system to deliver universal, affordable and quality healthcare (physical, mental, sexual and reproductive), including nutrition and WASH, that is gender-responsive and resilient to shocks

Output 1.2: Education system and institutions have the capacity to offer inclusive learning, including early childhood education, to all children and young people, life skills, comprehensive sexuality education and smooth transition from education to labour market, especially to the vulnerable, including in emergency situations

Output 1.3: Social and child protection policies and system (social insurance, social assistance and labour market interventions) improves in equity, coverage, shock-resilience and sustainability to protect vulnerable population groups

Output 1.4: The capacities are in place to deliver universal, affordable and quality water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services that is climate-resilient and gender-responsive

Output 1.5: The capacities are in place to protect, promote and support adequate access to nutritious foods and healthy diets to all people, with particular focus on vulnerable population groups

Output 1.6: Institutions and capacities are strengthened to enable the accessible, inclusive, multi-sectoral and quality gender-based violence response mechanisms in a more cohesive society with increased respect for and realization of gender equality and human rights, including migrant rights.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY-2
Green, Inclusive and Sustainable Growth

OUTCOME 2:

By 2027, the Mongolian economy is more diversified, innovative, productive, inclusive, green and geographically balanced enabling decent livelihoods, especially for women and youth, building 21st century skills, and promoting low-carbon development

Output 2.1: There are improved institutional capacities to deliver skilling and reskilling opportunities, and entrepreneurship training to women and youth to enhance their productive capacity for decent employment and employability, improve women, youth and marginalized people labour force participation including by better managing internal and international migration

Output 2.2: The policies, strategies and institutions are in place to promote greater diversification and transition of economy towards resource efficient and low carbon development, digital transformation, and make it more competitive, technologically innovative, and productive while also transforming the small enterprises towards greener employment, integrating with global value chains, increasing formal participation, resource-efficiency and resilience

Output 2.3: Government has the capacity to create transparent and predictable investment climate, innovative financing for the private investment in resource efficient and low-carbon development, and policies are in place to promote responsible consumption and production business practices, respect for human rights, without negative social, environmental or equity impact.

OUTCOME 3:

By 2027, communities and eco-systems in Mongolia are more resilient to climate change with improved capacity for evidence-informed and gender-responsive sustainable natural resource and environmental management and disaster risk reduction

Output 3.1: Regulatory systems for climate responsive planning and development strengthened to improve adaptive capacity and reduce socio-economic vulnerabilities and risks including disaster displacement risk

Output 3.2: Strengthen the resilience of resource-dependent herder communities through climate informed use and sustainable management of land, forest, biodiversity and water resources, improved livestock product value chains and effective planning and coordination of emergency response measures.

Output 3.3: Institutions/ Businesses and communities have the capacities and technical knowhow for sustainable management of natural resources and reversing biodiversity loss for improved ecosystem services and capacity to implement benefit sharing mechanism from diversified incomes especially for the herder community from the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY-3
People-centered Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights

OUTCOME 4:

By 2027, policy-making and implementation in Mongolia is more gender-responsive, participatory, coherent, evidence-informed and SDG-aligned; governance institutions at all levels are transparent and accountable; and people, especially the marginalised groups, have access to justice and rule of law for full realization of human rights

Output 4.1: The capacity of judicial institutions, National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia and civil society is improved to protect, promote and monitor human rights of all including the vulnerable population groups including labour rights

Output 4.2: Improved mechanisms and processes in place to effectively prevent and remedy violence and harassment against women and children, persons with disabilities, and human trafficking and promote gender equality, through frequent policy reviews , rigorous advocacy and outreach.

Output 4.3: National and sub-national stakeholders' capacities improved, including through digital transformation, to deliver services in a transparent, people-centred, efficient and effective manner; make coherent evidence-informed policy-making, monitoring, and reporting; and enable citizen participation in decision-making and empower them to hold authorities accountable

Output 4.4: Improved representation and participation of women and young people in elections, and local decision-making institutions including through civil society, youth councils and women's and young people's networks

Cross-cutting changes: Bridging digital divide and leveraging digital transformation; Mustering adequate development finance including through innovative sources; Managing demographic transition to meet the aspirations of the young; Preventing cross-border challenges from hindering the progress; Effectively combating harmful social norms, prejudices towards vulnerable groups, and negative gender stereotypes; and making disaggregated data available and promoting its use for decision-making

Assumptions: Government is committed and allocates adequate budget for health, education and social protection. COVID pandemic is contained and there is no further spread of cases. There are no hurdles in cross-border movement of goods and services. There is investment in infrastructure and digital transformation for effective service delivery. There is no fiscal crunch that could limit the space for government to provide services. There is political will to improve public administration and meaningfully combat corruption.

The theory of change above is grounded in the rights-based approach to development and also mainstreams the guiding principles: (1) leave no one behind (2) human rights-based approach (3) gender equality and women's empowerment (4) resilience (5) sustainability and (6) accountability. The UNSDCF will promote inclusion of the groups most at risk of being left behind to reduce intersectional inequalities between regions, population groups, and men and women. The new vulnerabilities that have emerged during COVID-19 will also be specifically addressed.

The pathways above are interlinked and reinforce each other. Strengthening the capacity of the institutions to deliver effectively and timely public services at all times will be critical across all solution pathways. Majority of future jobs will be generated by green, sustainable, and digital economy - which would require skilling, and reskilling and upskilling of the labour force, including for women and youth. Resilience of systems to withstand climatic, economic and health shocks will determine outcomes of investment in social services. Equality is an important goal to pursue not only for its intrinsic value but can be leveraged as an instrument to promote sustained economic growth and overall well-being of the population.

The UNSDCF is being formulated under the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is far from over and the impact of which is still unfolding. Though the pandemic has had serious socio-economic impact, it also offers an opportunity to revisit development paradigm and combine the principles of sustainable development and post-disaster recovery and risk management principles to "build forward better". In this regard, the UNSDCF will support the national development agenda as articulated in Vision-2050 and 2030 Agenda and the attainment of the SDGs.

The success of the UNSDCF hinges on a set of external and internal assumptions. It is assumed that:

1. Government is committed to and allocates adequate budget for health, education and social protection and there is no fiscal crunch that could limit the space for Government to provide services;
2. COVID-19 pandemic is well-managed, borders remain open at pre-COVID levels and there is no spill over from economic slowdown in neighbouring countries;
3. Short-term vested economic interests do not dominate the larger climate change and low-carbon pathways agenda and the Government is committed to addressing climate change through appropriate policies, laws, strategies, actions and financing;
4. There is enough community-level engagement to address social, economic, and environmental challenges;
5. The Government complies with the international human rights obligations, ensuring freedom from any form of gender-based violence, upholding labour laws, and at the same time empowering national human rights machinery and gender equality institutions, including civil society;
6. There is capacity in strengthening systems and mechanism to collect disaggregated data and use it for evidence-informed policy-making; and
7. There is political will to improve public administration and meaningfully combat corruption.

Successful implementation of the UNSDCF is dependent on the multi-stakeholder partnerships that would be leveraged to contribute to the realisation of the development vision. UN will work closely with the Government, private sector, and civil society to deliver on national development priorities and the SDGs. A detailed Resource Mobilization and Partnerships Strategy (RMPS) will be prepared after signing the UNSDCF. The RMPS will provide a comprehensive mapping of the key stakeholders and development partners in Mongolia and based on the funding gaps in the UNSDCF, organize periodic dialogues between the UN Country Team, government, donors, and other key partners with the aim to attract funding for the UNSDCF. It would explore ways to complement UN agencies' individual approaches to partnerships.

In addition, it will provide a platform to engage and convene the stakeholders for accelerated SDGs achievement by complementing and leveraging the work of other partners including donors, INGOs, and civil society. Finally, the strategy will not only focus on mobilizing resources and partnerships for the UNSDCF but also how the UNSDCF can be more effectively leveraged to catalyze additional and innovative financing instruments for SDGs implementation in Mongolia in line with the INFF.

The specific partnerships are described below for each of the outcomes and also listed in the Results Framework (Annex-1).

The UN system in Mongolia is well-placed to contribute to the key priorities of the UNSDCF the identification of which was also guided by UN's comparative advantage – its normative mandate, positioning and capacity (technical and financial). See section 2.7 for details.

The lessons that emerged out of implementation of previous UNDAF were also taken into consideration while designing the UNSDCF. The UNDAF evaluation (February 2022) confirmed its alignment with the Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision 2030, UNCT's flexibility as reflected in its deft response to the pandmeic, good example of joint programming that could serve as a model, and the normative role played by UNCT. However, key lessons learned include the need for greater ownership and engagement by the Government of the UNSDCF, sharper focus on the vulnerable groups in line with the LNOB principle, importance of a replication / scale-up strategy, and strengthening the role and effectiveness of the outcome groups and theme groups.

As recommended, UN has engaged the Government early on and will foster greater ownership by aligning with the national processes, such as NCSD, among others; has improved the design and usefulness of the UNSDCF as an instrument to capture a shared vision and mission in the context of the SDGs; will improve internal coordination and promote that UN entities' programmes are derived from and contribute to the UNSDCF priorities and outcomes; ensure greater mainstreaming of the guiding principles and gender equality and women's empowerment in the UNSDCF, through measurable indicators; and UNCT and the Government will establish an integrated national financing framework to strengthen SDG financing architecture and improve scale of impact.

2.2 Strategic priorities for the UN Development System

The development of the UNSDCF was based on a process that involved extensive consultations with key stakeholders including national partners (the Government of Mongolia, experts of line ministries and departments, civil society and private sector representatives, think tanks, academia, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, women and men), UN system organizations, both resident and non-resident, international development partners, as well as international financial institutions. The UNSDCF was further guided by the Government of Mongolia's Vision-2050, the UN Common Country Analysis, evaluation of UNDAF (2018-2022/2023), Socio-Economic Response Plan (prepared by UN in Mongolia in response to COVID-19), Voluntary National Review, and findings from the UN75 consultations with a cross-section of society.

UN in Mongolia organised a strategic visioning exercise in November 2021 to assess what should Mongolia look like by 2030.

In the strategic visioning, the 2030 Agenda was used as a milestone towards the larger national vision of 2050. The exercise helped UN in Mongolia contextualise the UNSDCF within a longer-term framework and align it with Vision-2050. Then it was followed by the strategic prioritization exercise which resulted in a common understanding of the development challenges facing the country, including those identified in the CCA, and a shared long-term vision about the future of the country. The consultations also led to development of a theory of change and the stakeholders identified the solution pathways that would lead the country to the shared vision. A set of "if" and "then" statements were developed identifying how the interventions will lead to the strategic priorities and from there to the development vision. There was also an enhanced appreciation of the UN's comparative advantage and its value proposition.

Rural families are on the move. Photo credit: IOM Mongolia / N.Nurjas

As a results of these exercises, and informed by the theory of change, UN jointly with the Government and other stakeholders, identified the following priorities:

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

UNCT in Mongolia will contribute to strengthening the system of social services including healthcare, education and social protection. It will work towards a more holistic healthcare system comprising physical (communicable and NCDs), mental, sexual, and reproductive healthcare based on the 'one health' principle that recognises that human health is dependent on animal and environmental health. The UN system will also support food-based approaches to nutrition and health including promoting food safety and dietary diversity including protecting people's right to adequate food. Support to education will be over the life cycle from early childhood development to holistic education that meets global / regional quality standards and enables smooth education-to-work transition through 21st century skills, including life skills, and prepare them for the 'new' economy. UN will contribute to making social protection spending more efficient, equitable and improved in coverage. At the same time, social protection will be made more shock-responsive and inclusive, in particular responding to the needs of the herders, persons with disabilities, women and children, and older persons. The interventions under this strategic priority will particularly focus on the population groups excluded or at the risk of being excluded and will work with national and local governance structures. The strategic priority will contribute to Vision-2050, in particular to objectives under Goal 2.

THE OUTCOME THAT WILL ADDRESS THIS PRIORITY IS:

Outcome 1:

By 2027, people in urban and rural areas, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, equally realize their full human potential and benefit from inclusive, rights-based, gender- and shock-responsive health and nutrition, education, social protection, WASH and other services.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2:
GREEN, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

UNCT will contribute to the country's transition to a greener, more productive and diversified economy that is innovative, competitive and job-rich. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the unsustainability of minerals-led economy and the need for more broad-based growth coming progressively from sustainable agriculture, livestock economy, services, and manufacturing. UNCT will provide assistance to the government in formulating responsible and environment-friendly investment policies for private sector particularly strengthening MSMEs' access to markets, finance and technology and linking them to value chains. Digital transformation and engagement of youth would be one of the strategies to promote e-commerce and increase competitiveness and formalisation of the Mongolian economy. As the economy moves towards low-carbon activities, adjustments would be needed to protect the vulnerable groups during this transition and build resilience by putting in place mechanism to combat climate change, manage natural resources more sustainably and prepare communities and institutions for responding to hazards and disasters. As the women and vulnerable groups bear disproportionate burden of environmental changes and disasters, they will be particularly targeted under the UNSDCF.

THE TWO OUTCOMES THAT WILL ADDRESS THE STRATEGIC PRIORITY ARE:

Outcome 2:

By 2027, the Mongolian economy is more diversified, innovative, productive, inclusive, green and geographically balanced enabling decent livelihoods, especially for women and youth, building 21st century skills, and promoting low-carbon development.

Outcome 3:

By 2027, communities and eco-systems in Mongolia are more resilient to climate change with improved capacity for evidence-informed and gender-responsive sustainable natural resource and environmental management and disaster risk reduction.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3:
PEOPLE-CENTRED GOVERNANCE, RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

UNCT will support the Government and other stakeholders in continuing governance reforms establishing effective rule of law with strong, independent, and impartial justice institutions, and the Ombudsman, to protect and promote human rights, notably for the vulnerable groups. Support will also be provided for better inter-ministerial coordination, integrated SDG-aligned planning and budgeting, and evidence-based decision-making enabled by disaggregated data.

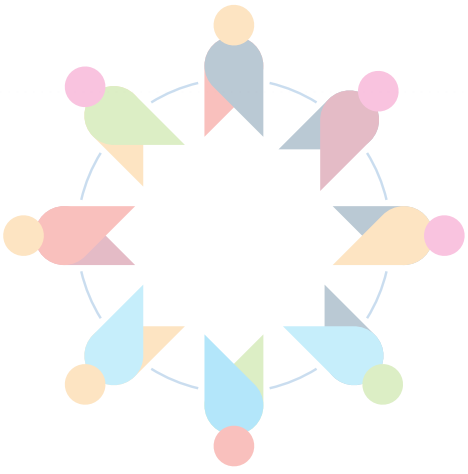
UNCT will contribute to making civil servants increasingly merit-based, non-partisan and responsive to the people-centred service delivery. Civic space will be leveraged for monitoring implementation of anti-discrimination laws and countering hate speech, harmful social practices, and negative stereotypes. UNCT will facilitate the civic dialogue building on the normative mandate of its members and operationalizing LNOB principle.

THE OUTCOME THAT WILL ADDRESS THIS IS:

Outcome 4:

By 2027, policy-making and implementation in Mongolia is more gender-responsive, participatory, coherent, evidence-informed and SDG-aligned; governance institutions at all levels are transparent and accountable; and people, especially the marginalised groups, have access to justice and rule of law for full realization of human rights.

The table below shows alignment of the Vision-2050 objectives (Phase -1: 2021-2030), and thematic priorities thereunder, with the UNSDCF priorities and the SDGs. Alignment with the SDG targets can be seen in the Results Framework at Annex-1.



UNSDCF Strategic Priorities	Outcomes & relevant "P"	Vision-2050 –Long-term development Policy of Mongolia	Sustainable Development Goals
Human Development and Well-being	OUTCOME 1: PEOPLE	**Goal 2: Human development** • quality education for lifelong learning • quality healthcare • active / healthy lifestyles, aging • nutrition, dietary diversity, food security and safety • control air, water, soil pollution, create clean and green environment • improve skills and increase employment **Goal 3: Quality of life and middle-class** • expand social insurance coverage, fully cover vulnerable groups • set up independent social insurance system • affordable housing • enabling environment for MSMEs • entrepreneurship • support herders/farmers • reduce inequality	SDG 1 No poverty SDG 2 Zero hunger SDG 3 Good health and well-being SDG 4 Quality education SDG 5 Gender equality SDG 6 Clean water and sanitation SDG 7 Affordable and clean energy SDG 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities Goal 17 Partnerships for the Goals
Green, Inclusive and Sustainable Growth	OUTCOME 2: PROSPERITY	**Goal 4: Economy** • macroeconomic stability • responsible mining, agro-processing, tourism, creative industry • more productive food and agriculture sector • agro-ecological value chains • inclusive finance • regional economic & trade integration • enhance competitive capacity • wealth fund for diversified, innovative, & green growth **Goal 8: Regional and local development** • enhanced connectivity for rapid economic growth • develop eco-tourism • sustainable agriculture in line with green economy principles	SDG 1 No poverty SDG 2 Zero hunger SDG 5 Gender equality SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth SDG 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure SDG 10 Reduced inequalities Goal 17 Partnerships for the Goals
	OUTCOME 3: PLANET	**Goal 4: Economy** • macroeconomic stability • responsible mining, agro-processing, tourism, creative industry • inclusive finance • regional economic & trade integration • enhance competitive capacity • wealth fund for diversified, innovative, & green growth	SDG 1 No poverty SDG 2 Zero hunger SDG 5 Gender equality SDG 7 Affordable and clean energy

UNSDCF Strategic Priorities	Outcomes & relevant "P"	Vision-2050 –Long-term development Policy of Mongolia	Sustainable Development Goals
Green, Inclusive and Sustainable Growth	OUTCOME 3: PLANET	**Goal 6: Green development** • valuation, protection, restoration of natural resources • prevent water scarcity, provide safe drinking water • Climate risk informed river basin management • low emission, productive & inclusive green development • build resilience to climate change • develop green financing system with private sector **Goal 8: Regional and local development** • enhanced connectivity for rapid economic growth • develop eco-tourism • sustainable agriculture in line with green economy principles **Goal 9: Ulaanbaatar and satellite cities** • Sustainable and resilient, people-centred cities	SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth SDG 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure SDG 10 Reduced inequalities SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities Goal 12 Sustainable consumption and production Goal 13 Climate action Goal 15 Life on land Goal 17 Partnerships for the Goals
People-Centred Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights	OUTCOME 4: PEACE	**Goal 1: Shared national values** • fostering national pride • preserving nomadic civilization • Mongolia language and script • research on values, international Mongolian studies • world Mongolians **Goal 5: Governance** • independent judiciary • effective policy implementation • participation of private sector and civil society • legal framework for private sector development • efficient e-governance • merit-based, professional, accountable, ethical & stable civil service • strong national system to protect human rights • corruption-free governance **Goal 7: Safe and secure society** • combat organised transnational crime • enhance local disaster protection capacity • legal reform in line with international standards • law enforcement capacity enhanced • enhance cyber security	SDG 1 No poverty SDG 2 Zero hunger SDG 5 Gender equality SDG 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure SDG 10 Reduced inequalities SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities Goal 12 Sustainable consumption and production Goal 13 Climate action Goal 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions Goal 17 Partnerships for the Goals

The UN in Mongolia will support those SDGs and specific targets that are aligned with the national policies and strategies in support of the Vision-2050. The UN recognises that contribution to the 2030 Agenda also contributes to achievement of human rights as the UNSDCF follows the Guiding Principles including the rights-based approach to development, gender equality, and women's empowerment and "leave no one behind".

2.3 Cooperation Framework outcomes and partnerships

The four outcomes organised under three strategic priorities in the UNSDCF represent key institutional, behavioural, or legislative changes that are critical for catalysing progress towards the desired impact for sustainable development.

The Government of Mongolia, UN Country Team and development stakeholders jointly make a substantial contribution to these outcomes, but do not have direct control. The outcomes are measurable through a set of indicators as defined in the Results Framework.

For each outcome, the outputs will be the results-changes in capacities, knowledge of individuals or institutions or availability of new products / services - where the UN system, working through its partners, will have more direct control and be accountable for the same. These indicative outputs will be further refined along with the sub-outputs to be defined in the Country Programmes and strategic programme documents by concerned UN entities during the preparation of the Joint Work Plan of the Cooperation Framework.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

Outcome 1:

By 2027, people in urban and rural areas, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, equally realize their full human potential and benefit from inclusive, rights-based, gender- and shock-responsive health and nutrition, education, social protection, WASH and other services.

THEORY OF CHANGE

The theory of change for this outcome is that to improve human development and well-being for people in Mongolia, a robust system of social services needs to be put in place. This would include a universal, resilient, and equitable healthcare system that addresses the physical, mental and sexual and reproductive healthcare needs over the life course, especially of vulnerable groups; sustainable and equitable food systems that ensures access to safe and nutritious food, promotes sustainable consumption, boosts nature positive production, improving learning outcomes especially focusing on putting children in the preschool and reducing gaps in rural-urban areas and between social groups; imparting vocational and life skills for smooth transition from school to work; and a social protection system that is gender- and shock-responsive, and is appropriately designed for efficiency and coverage to protect vulnerable population groups. This would also include a comprehensive migration policy focused on contributing to the acceleration of development and achievement of SDGs while reducing the vulnerabilities of those in irregular state or forcibly displaced, both internally and internationally. The theory of change particularly focuses on improving access to basic services for population groups at risk of being excluded such as persons with disabilities, internal migrants, herders, child victims of violence and exploitation, GBV/DV survivors, rural population, ethnic minorities, women and men with intersectional vulnerabilities, and sexual minorities, all of whose participation in the policy-making, implementation and monitoring will make service delivery more responsive and people-centred. People's welfare is equally dependent on cohesion in society and how effectively discriminatory and harmful attitudes, practices, stereotypes, social norms and attitudes towards women, ethnic and sexual minorities, vulnerable children and adolescents and youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, and migrants are countered.

UN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE OUTCOME

The UN in Mongolia will work towards strengthening the healthcare system following a whole-of-system approach and positioning it as a service and as an economic sector crucial for the achievement of other SDGs. UN interventions will aim at achieving the universal health coverage by providing more integrated, affordable and accessible services especially focusing on the high-priority health challenges including non-communicable diseases, such as cancer, sexual and reproductive health, and health issues linked to climate change and air pollution through multi-stakeholder partnerships and improved coordination. Given the positive impact good nutrition has on health, ability to learn and productivity, UN will advocate for higher budget allocations and through multi-sectoral interventions contributing to reversing the worrying trends on malnutrition, stunting, micronutrient deficiencies and obesity among children. Post-COVID-19 pandemic, gaps in mother and child healthcare services as well as for adolescents and young people and mental health services also emerged as major public health concerns that would be addressed through institutional capacity building. UN will support the Government in formulating an appropriate health financing system to reduce out-of-pocket expenses. With a view to building resilience in the healthcare system, the UN will work towards greater digitisation of healthcare, in line with the Vision-2050 Goal on e-health, and build/strengthen health management information system in support of evidence-based decision-making. While recognising the universal nature of health care, UN will continue to focus on the healthcare needs of the vulnerable groups/areas.

The UN will contribute to the alignment of SDG4 targets in education sector policy and strategic plan and SDG4 indicator national benchmarking to track progress. Taking a more holistic and lifecycle approach, UN will contribute to strengthening the early childhood development system through advocacy, awareness creation, capacity building and intersectoral interventions (health, nutrition, governance, WASH, environment) particularly focusing on the disadvantaged groups and areas. With a view to provide equal opportunities to all population groups to access equitable, inclusive quality education, UN will support evidence-based sector -wide planning, policy analysis, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation of the education sector to bridge the gap between enrolment and attendance, especially among the children and adolescents with disabilities. Parents will be involved as a key stakeholder group in educational planning and monitoring.

The UN will mainstream disaster risk reduction and response aspects in the school curriculum. The UN will contribute to strengthening institutional capacity to mainstream climate change education and education for sustainable development at all levels. UN will contribute to improving the learning outcomes through improved teaching methods, curriculum reform and tools. Cognisant of the digital divide in the country, UN will work towards a more inclusive approach to the digitalisation of education with a solid ICT in Education Policy framework and master plan to build resilience to shocks, while recognising that this cannot replace the children's physical school attendance for its contribution to children's holistic development and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). The UN will contribute to strengthening the teacher competencies and standards in ICT for digital transformation in the education sector. UN will also advocate for, and support, programmatic interventions to impart soft skills and career counselling for enhancing employability of the youth and smooth transition from school to work, and shaping skills, technical and vocational education and training and lifelong learning for future of work and aligned with the needs of the labour market. The UN will contribute to strengthening the higher education sector in national qualifications framework, recognition of qualification, accreditation, and mobility of students.

Since a comprehensive social and child protection system is an essential investment in containing poverty levels and building human capital, UN will contribute to making the social protection system more shock-responsive by advocating for vertical and horizontal expansions of benefits under multiple schemes, expanding the coverage especially to

informal workers and herders and other vulnerable groups (e.g. older persons) and maintaining the universality and the size of social protection system. UN will continue to support inclusive child protection systems in preventing and responding to child protection violations and to effectively address the behavioural, social, cultural, and economic determinants of child protection violations at scale. Where children are experiencing violations, UN will collaborate with partners to strengthen access to response services to prevent recurrence and provide care, support and justice. At the same time, UN will continue to provide support for improved efficiency in social spending, such as through digital transformation and Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF), creating fiscal space for shock-responsive social protection, including food and fuel price shocks (such as those caused by the Russia-Ukraine situation).

The UN in Mongolia will support to strengthen capacity of vulnerable groups including young people to participate in the policy-making, implementation and monitoring of programmes and services that affect their lives across the development-humanitarian continuum.

Addressing the high prevalence of violence against women and children and ensuring gender equality in line with the CEDAW Committee, UPR and CRC recommendations the UN will continue to work on strengthening the inclusive, accessible, and multi-sectoral violence prevention. UN will also support the Government of Mongolia to implement the recommendations of the UN Special Rapporteur on the measures for preventing and combating violence against women in the country.

Recognizing that internal migration has been and remains the main vehicle for uncontrolled urbanization, through extensive ger areas in Ulaanbaatar and most of the aimag capitals, the UN will work with national, municipal and local institutions to create and promote regular pathways for internal migration, support economic and social integration of migrants reducing vulnerabilities and maximizing development impact of their contributions in receiving and sending communities. In addition, UN will also contribute to improving the housing and living conditions, especially for the urban poor, and strengthen city / urban planning as a means to improving urbanisation outcomes. Being one of the groups that suffered the most from the pandemic and related response measures, Mongolians abroad too need continuous assistance and renewed engagement to help Mongolia's development beyond remittances going deeper into investments, social transfers etc.

PARTNERSHIPS

Achievement of the outcome above requires engagement and commitment across multiple Government ministries, departments and institutions, development partners, private sector (international and domestic) and civil society (international and domestic). In addition, regional institutions and south-south and triangular cooperation will also play an important role in contributing to the progress under this outcome. UN will thus build strategic partnerships with and engage a wide range of partners comprising, but not limited to, national government, local governments at aimags, soums and districts and khoroos levels, independent bodies like the National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia, human rights defenders, National Commission on Gender Equality, local, national and international NGOs (including organizations of persons with disabilities or OPDs), development partners including IFIs, trade unions, private sector entities, community-based organisations representing LNOB, training institutions, think tanks and academia, and media. Partnership with regional frameworks will also be fostered such as Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) and the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific[14] among others. The list of key partners is at Annex-1 (Results Framework).

[14] UNESCAP. (13 January 2021). Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific Retrieved from https://www.unescap.org/kp/2021/action-plan-strengthen-regional-cooperation-social-protection-asia-and-pacific

ASSUMPTIONS

- The macro-economic situation of the country remains comfortable and there is enough fiscal space for maintaining and enhancing social spending noting that weak governance and financing gap are the prime challenges towards achievement of SDGs.
- There is political will and commitment to improve efficiency and design of social sector programmes for improved sustainability, better coverage and equity.
- The COVID-19 situation remains under control, and the health system remains resilient to future outbreaks.
- There are no major hurdles to developing digital infrastructure for improved delivery of social services, especially to the most vulnerable.

UNCT CONFIGURATION

The UN agencies, funds and programmes that will contribute to this outcome are: FAO, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDRR, UNESCAP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitiat, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV and WHO. Collectively, these have the required expertise and resources to work towards the outcome and will explore joint programming opportunities. The agencies will work with relevant partners through (a) capacity building of the service providers (b) innovative, digital and integrated solutions (c) advocacy to end harmful and discriminatory practices and violence against women and children and persons with disabilities (d) leveraging knowledge networks (e) creating awareness about human and labour rights and (f) ensuring the centrality of LNOB principle in the programmatic interventions.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2:
GREEN, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Outcome 2:

By 2027, the Mongolian economy is more diversified, innovative, productive, inclusive, green and geographically balanced enabling decent livelihoods, especially for women and youth, building 21st century skills, and promoting low-carbon development.

THEORY OF CHANGE

The theory of change for this outcome is that to move towards a green, inclusive, and sustainable growth model the country needs to put policies in place that would diversify the economy (sectorally and geographically) and reduce dependence on minerals-based economy. This would require enabling conditions for more competitive and productive agriculture sector, agriculture-based inclusive and sustainable industrialization respecting agro-ecological principles, the private sector, including micro and small enterprises, to access technology, finance and markets and be linked to the domestic and global value chains, including through digital trade; policies and laws that are gender-responsive that would promote responsible investment compliant with environmental, social and governance standards; institutional capacities to bridge the skills mismatch by providing 21st century skills including entrepreneurship for youth and women, and possibilities for skills mobility and persons with disabilities; policies and investments aimed at closing the digital divide for underserved areas and sectors, so as to foster inclusive digital transformation; innovative, nature-based green livelihood opportunities such as agro-eco-tourism; enabling herder community to supply livestock products to value addition that are sustainable and climate-resilient; skilling and other opportunities to improve women's and youth's labour force participation through decent work including that of persons with disabilities; reduce women's unpaid care work burden; support women-led businesses; improved cross-border cooperation to prevent supply chain disruptions and ensure free circulation of goods and people; and a fiscal policy that is agile, transparent and accountable enabling revenue and expenditure tracking.

UN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE OUTCOME

In the Decade of Action, there is need to accelerate the pace of achievement of SDGs, especially the ones where Mongolia lags behind. For this, UN will contribute to strengthening the SDG financing architecture by supporting Mongolia in operationalizing Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF). UN will work towards promoting responsible investment – both public and private – that complies with the environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards and is SDG-aligned and gender-responsive. Working with the Government, the Development Bank of Mongolia and the key international and domestic financial institutions, UN will contribute to putting in place policy and regulatory framework for sustainable finance and will explore innovative financial instruments to meet the funding gap including remittances and diaspora investments.

It is expected that these interventions will contribute to enhanced financing for SDG attainment, infrastructure development, gender-responsive and SDG-aligned budgeting and build greater transparency in the flow of resources. These actions will be supplemented by UN's support to promoting human rights compliance by business and building capacity of duty bearers to ensure that violations do not occur and if they do quick remedy is available. Particularly in the context of mining and infrastructure projects, UN will strengthen the mechanisms for the local communities to access full and correct information, on environmental and human rights impacts, and that their right to be heard and compensated is protected.

UN in Mongolia will contribute to reducing the country's dependence on the volatile mining sector and extend support for increasing the diversification of the economy, which is a key national priority. The pandemic further heightened the volatility of the economy and underscored the need to diversify. The pandemic also offered an opportunity to building forward better – inclusive, green and digital. UN will support the Government in strengthening the contribution of agriculture, manufacturing, and services by enhancing productivity of these sectors and creating more employment for women and men through multiple actions. Facilitation of urban-to-rural migration as a means to inject new human capital into regional and local development is another post-pandemic trend that should be further explored. UN will support the national efforts at addressing the challenges of a largely informal economy by transforming it and formalising it while at the same time carrying out reforms in laws and policies that affect informal enterprises and vulnerable groups the most, including increasing access to credit, innovations, and linking them to value chains (such as cashmere, meat processing, textiles, leather, milk and products) and providing social protection to informal workers.

UN will contribute to digital transformation including by carrying out a readiness assessment for e-commerce providing recommendations that will help the country build resilience and increase productivity. A new knowledge-based economy well-poised for Industry 4.0 would require matching skills. UN will work towards identifying skilling needs and gaps, especially for women, youth, and persons with disabilities, and build capacities of the institutions to work with the private sector to co-create market-driven and 21st century skills, including soft skills, with increased possibilities for skills mobility, to enhance employability in particular of the large youth population thus benefiting from the opportunities arising from the demographical and geographical structure and trends.

PARTNERSHIPS

A range of partners are needed to contribute to promoting green, inclusive, and sustainable growth. The national government in relevant ministries and sub-national governments will be the primary partners. As the prime movers of the economic growth and employment, private sector (international and domestic) will be a critical partner. UN partners would also include industry and professional associations, workers and employers through their associations, development partners including IFIs, national and international NGOs, educational institutions, skills training institutions, research organisations and think tanks, and media, among others. Partnership with regional frameworks will also be fostered such as Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor; Northeast Asia Super grid; and multiple trade and infrastructure agreements, networks and programmes under the aegis of UNESCAP. The key partners can be seen in the Results Framework (Annex-1).

ASSUMPTIONS

- The Russia-Ukraine situation does not affect the overall financial flow as well as public and private sector financial management thus limiting Mongolia's ability to raise financing for SDGs.
- There is commitment to carry out long-term reform in the economy in line with the low-carbon pathways.
- The macroeconomic situation is comfortable, debt level sustainable and fiscal space available for social spending.
- There is adequate investment in infrastructure, new value-chain establishment, innovations, and digital transformation.
- There is conducive and predictable investment climate and the country remains attractive for international and domestic private investors.
- There is commitment to make extractive industries more transparent, environmentally sustainable, and inclusive in terms of local development as well as compliant with international standards such as Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

UNCT CONFIGURATION

The UN agencies, funds and programmes that will contribute to this outcome are: FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITC, ITU, OHCHR, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCAP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNOPS and UNV. Collectively, these have the required expertise and resources to work towards the outcome and will explore joint programming opportunities. The agencies will work through (a) capacity building of the Government for mainstreaming INFF in the line ministries for SDG-aligned planning, budgeting and monitoring frameworks (b) technical assistance for digital transformation including e-commerce and innovative and integrated solutions (c) advocacy to rapid and just transition to low-carbon pathways (d) leveraging regional / global knowledge networks and (e) ensuring the centrality of LNOB principle in the programmatic interventions

Outcome 3:

By 2027, communities and eco-systems in Mongolia are more resilient to climate change with improved capacity for evidence-informed and gender-responsive sustainable natural resource and environmental management and disaster risk reduction.

THEORY OF CHANGE

The theory of change for this outcome is that for building resilience of the communities and eco-systems, the country needs to put in place gender-responsive public policies, laws, strategies and institutional mechanisms to combat climate change through mitigation and adaptation across all sectors; adopt clean and renewable energy and technology, and accelerate low-carbon ('green') pathway; promote decentralized natural resource governance and build capacities of local governance institutions to adopt sustainable land, forests and water management policies and practices especially benefiting the herder community; help herders to reduce livestock population to lighten the burden on land and make animal husbandry more environment-friendly; ensure that investment in mining and infrastructure is based on social and environmental impact assessment transparently shared with the local communities; build capacities for local communities to reduce disaster risks and respond to disasters and emergencies; empower women – who bear disproportionate burden of environmental degradation and climate change – through improved access to information on environmental impact of projects, tapping their local knowledge in natural resource management and disaster risk reduction, and involving them in decision-making; create conditions to mobilise additional innovative climate finance linked to sustainable development and nature based solutions; create public awareness and behavioural change in support of nature-sensitive investment, production and consumption; promote more sustainable and inclusive cities in terms of livelihoods, living conditions including housing and civic amenities, air quality, waste management and resilience to disasters; and address gaps in environmental governance, data and legal framework as well as prepare for natural disaster and climate-change induced displacement and protect those displaced.

UN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE OUTCOME

Taking a more holistic, gender responsive and integrated approach to environmental governance, UN will assist the Government and other stakeholders in combating climate change through mitigation and adaptation, sustainable natural resource management (land, water, biodiversity) practices, and building capacities to manage and respond to disaster risks. UN will work towards enhanced capacity of the Government to address climate change by mainstreaming climate change into sector policies and strategies, including agriculture, infrastructure, energy, transport, WASH, and others, to meet its emission reduction commitments under the NDCs framework and to prepare communities for better adaptation. UN will support the Government to take climate action down to the local levels by building capacities for climate-responsive development planning, financing, implementation and monitoring by local governance bodies including preparedness for disaster displacement risk.

Given the vast pasturelands, most of it subject to degradation in varying degrees, UN will undertake programmatic interventions to promote with local communities and local governments sustainable management of pastureland including livestock management and make efforts to contain methane emissions from agriculture through reduction of the livestock number and improvement of market access of sustainable livestock products.

Mining-based economic activities are a major source of land, soil, water and air quality degradation and pollution caused by use of mercury and other hazardous chemicals. This poses serious challenge to the health of the communities. UN will work with the private sector, local communities and governments for sustainable chemical waste management. UN will also contribute to supporting safe management of medical waste and recycling of plastic especially in urban areas.

Moving forward, the country will need to adopt low-carbon pathways using climate-friendly technologies, clean energy, resource-efficient processes and environmentally responsible production and consumption. The country will need to put efficient waste management and recycling systems in place in support of the circular economy. Recognising that the country has high potential for wind and solar energy, UN will promote increasing the share of renewable energy in final energy consumption and gradual phase out of coal, in addition to the export of renewable energy in the region and sub-region. This will significantly contribute to the reduction of air pollution and related health consequences particularly for children and pregnant women.

Mongolia is highly vulnerable to disasters caused by climate change and unsustainable natural resource management practices. Degradation of ecosystems has led to large-scale displacement of population from rural to urban areas and loss of local economy. UN will contribute to building resilience of communities in line with the Sendai Framework through disaster risk reduction, preparedness and response. This will be supported by national level comprehensive, intersectoral actions in terms of sharing information, early warning system, vulnerability assessment tools, hazard mapping, protecting lives and livelihoods, investing into the income and job opportunities in the rural provinces and providing shock-responsive social protection focusing, among others, on women and girls, persons with disabilities, and older persons with intersectional vulnerabilities.

Challenges posed by climate change are huge and wide-ranging, affecting the whole society, economy, and jeopardising Mongolia's future growth trajectory. Addressing these also requires enormous amounts of finances, which are often not available from the normal budgetary sources. Tapping into innovative climate finance instruments through the private sector, especially foreign investors, can significantly bridge the gap. Linked to the UN support on SDG-financing, mentioned above, UN will provide technical support and build institutional capacity to mobilise climate-linked finance.

PARTNERSHIPS

UN will work with, a range of line ministries dealing with specific sectors that have a direct bearing on the outcome. The partners would include, besides the Government at national and sub-national level, research, and scientific organizations, think tanks and academia, national and international NGOs including OPDs, youth organisations, local (affected) communities, volunteers, development partners including IFIs, private sector (international and domestic) including industry associations, and media, among others. Recognising that some of the environmental challenges are cross-boundary in nature, cooperation with regional frameworks will also be fostered such as with CAREC, multiple agreements, frameworks, and networks under the aegis of the UNESCAP such as North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation. The key partners also can be seen in the Results Framework (Annex-1).

ASSUMPTIONS

- There is political will and commitment to follow low-carbon development pathways and the short-term economic interests do not distract the country from the long-term vision.
- The country is able to mobilise financial resources – including through market-based instruments – for addressing climate change.
- There is greater regional and cross-border cooperation on environmental and disaster risks in terms of information sharing and action.

UNCT CONFIGURATION

The UN agencies, funds and programmes that will contribute to this outcome are: FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNDP, UNDRR, UNEP, UNESCAP, UNESCO, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV and WHO. Collectively, these have the required expertise and resources to work towards the outcome and will explore joint programming opportunities. The agencies will work through (a) capacity building of the national institutions and communities (b) innovative, digital and integrated solutions (c) technical assistance in promoting and measuring green economy (d) leveraging knowledge networks (e) advocating for sustainable production and consumption and (f) keeping "leave no one behind" principle central to the programmatic interventions.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3:
PEOPLE-CENTRED GOVERNANCE, RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Outcome 4:

By 2027, policy-making and implementation in Mongolia is more gender-responsive, participatory, coherent, evidence-informed and SDG-aligned; governance institutions at all levels are transparent and accountable; and people, especially the marginalised groups, have access to justice and rule of law for full realization of human rights.

THEORY OF CHANGE

The underlying theory of change for this outcome is that to achieve people-centred governance with respect for rule of law and human rights, including gender equality, there is need for policy-planning, budgeting, financing, and results monitoring and reporting to become more coherent, evidence-based and SDG-aligned with the availability and use of disaggregated data; institutional settings are functionally aligned with each other and are capacitated and accountable; the judicial system and law enforcement agencies and national human rights mechanisms to improve to make it more independent, effective, gender- and child-sensitive, disability-inclusive and responsive to the justice needs of the marginalised groups; corruption and organised crime to be tackled through enforcement of laws and preventive action; civil service to be non-partisan, more professional, merit-based, and accountable; free and independent media that plays a strong watchdog function to keep the government accountable; potential of digital transformation to be tapped; meaningful participation of the civil society and public, especially the marginalised groups, through civic engagement and volunteering in the design and implementation of services and policies, and monitoring of human rights realisation encouraged; human trafficking especially of women and children tackled; discriminatory practices, harmful social and gender norms, hate speech, disinformation and fake news firmly countered; conducive environment created for women's participation in social, economic and political life; and decentralization is strengthened for local development planning, budgeting and implementation of services in an integrated manner, especially benefiting the vulnerable groups.

UN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE OUTCOME

Building on its normative mandate, UN will work towards setting up effective institutional mechanisms and enhancing capacity in the government for having integrated, coherent, evidence-informed, SDGs-aligned policy, planning, budgeting, and results monitoring and reporting and developing procedures to implement the laws and policies. UN will work to improve the coordination capacity of the Government in policy making, implementation and monitoring for sustainable development. UN will continue to support the Government in strengthening the data eco-system to fill data gaps for SDG monitoring and reporting, using innovative approaches, as well as SDG alignment with the national development policies and plans to achieve full nationalisation of SDG indicators /targets, and financing of the SDGs.

UN will continue to support the Government, the National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia, the National Gender Equality Commission of Mongolia and the National Tripartite Committee on Labour and Social Partnership in the effective implementation of its human, including gender and labour, rights obligations notably those under UPR and international human rights treaties. UN will assist the Government to further align the laws on gender equality, gender-based violence, child rights and labour laws, among others, with international norms. UN will further contribute to harmonization of national laws with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) that Mongolia ratified in 2009. Strengthening outreach and advocacy, UN will contribute to effectively prevent and respond to violence, and discrimination, against women and children and persons with disabilities, and promote gender equality by addressing negative social norms and stigmatizing social attitudes. Recognising that some vulnerable population groups do not have the resources to access legal aid, UN will work with the Government and civil society to protect the 'right to defence' as fundamental right and strengthen provision of free legal aid to the poor and vulnerable. The UNCT is committed to support and monitor the law on protecting the human rights defenders.

Cognizant of the importance of the identification of victims of trafficking as the first, fundamental step to access support and rehabilitation services, UN will continue building the capacity of law enforcement agencies, service providers and other relevant authorities in identifying, referring and assisting victims of trafficking following a human rights-based and gender-sensitive approach. The UN will also support the government in monitoring business entities and organizations as a means to prevent labour trafficking and promote fair and ethical recruitment practices.

UN will promote digital transformation for making the economy innovative (as mentioned in outcome 2) and improved public service delivery, improving digital literacy, while bridging the digital divides between rural and urban areas, men and women, persons with and without disabilities, leaving no one behind. This work will be done in alignment with Mongolia's Digital Nation Strategy. Furthermore, UN will strengthen the national capacity on the availability and quality and utilization of disaggregated data for evidence-informed policy and planning.

While the civil society enjoys relative freedom and space in the country, UN will work to create supportive environment where civic space is available for people to meaningfully participate in decision-making particularly focusing on the participation of women and the youth, and persons with disabilities, including opportunities for civic engagement and volunteering.

The UN will support capacity building in areas of population development data collection and utilization, and particularly, looking at benefiting from demographic dividend to ensure meaningful participation of youth and youth-led organizations in decision making

PARTNERSHIPS

UN will work with a whole range of partners to contribute to the outcome of achieving people-centred governance that respects human rights, gender equality, and promotes rule of law and good governance. Partnership with the parliamentarians, whole of the government and associated ministries/departments, sub-national governments, law enforcement agencies, judiciary, legal aid providers, local bodies and hurals as well as bodies like National Statistics Office, the National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia, the National Gender Equality Commission, the Supreme Court, the General Election Committee, the Coordination Council of Crimes Prevention of Mongolia, the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, the Civil Service Council, national and international NGOs including OPDs, women and youth organisations, faith-based organizations, volunteer-involving organizations and volunteer

groups, development partners including IFIs, trade/ labour unions, community-based organisations representing LNOB, training institutions, think tanks and academia, and media will be enhanced to achieve the outcome. The UNSDCF envisages close partnership with regional organisations and frameworks such as the Warsaw Declaration, ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting), OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe), APF (Asia and Pacific Forum on Human rights institutions), Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific. The list of key partners is at Annex-1 (Results Framework).

ASSUMPTIONS

- There is political will and commitment to protecting and promoting human rights and ensuring gender equality in line with the country's international obligations.
- There is greater policy coherence, and the Government will continue to carry out governance reforms encompassing justice system, law enforcement machinery and civil service.
- There is space for civil society to participate and hold government actions to account.
- Disaggregated data is available and used to make evidence-based decision-making.

UNCT CONFIGURATION

The UN agencies, funds and programmes that will contribute to this outcome are: FAO, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCAP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV, UN Women and WHO. Collectively, these UN entities have the required expertise and resources to work with the duty bearers and rights holders towards the outcome through (a) capacity development of key institutions of governance (b) advocating for social cohesion and ending harmful and discriminatory practices, social attitudes and norms (c) technical support for digital transformation and delivery of integrated services (d) leveraging regional/global knowledge networks (e) staying focused on the LNOB agenda and ensuring the centrality of LNOB principle in the programmatic interventions.

2.4 Synergies between Cooperation Framework outcomes

The three strategic priorities and four outcomes above are interlinked and have considerable synergies, which will be leveraged for integration and accelerated achievement of SDGs and the national priorities. The outcome on human development entails investment in health, nutrition, education, and social protection, which is essential for itself for people to realise their full potential and for the country to achieve outcome on inclusive, green and sustainable growth.

Climate change and environmental degradation pose the planetary boundaries within which sustainable development could take place. Extreme weather events, loss of control over natural resources, the risk of disasters and increasing vulnerability to pollution-linked health challenges are neither conducive for people's well-being nor for sustainable economic growth. The nexus between environment and growth points to the need for Mongolia to move away from extractives to greener, low-carbon growth. A disaster or another pandemic can divert resources from development to emergency response and shrink fiscal space for the Government to provide for social services (health, education, and social protection) with adverse impact on all SDGs and UNSDCF outcomes. Hence, building resilience to disasters and preparedness is critical to the success of the UNSDCF.

People-centred governance, rule of law, gender equality, and human rights crosscut and serve as means of implementation for all the other areas of intervention. Better compliance with human rights standards and gender equality will promote more inclusive development. By contributing to strengthening governance institutions, promoting people's participation, in particular women's, and greater accountability of the authorities towards people, the UNSDCF would also contribute to better health, education, jobs, and social protection while respecting environment and "leaving no one behind." By building greater transparency and resilience through digitalisation, information-sharing and capacity building of institutions and communities, the UNSDCF will contribute to accelerated SDG progress across all outcomes.

Focus on LNOB groups across all outcomes will advance the development results.

Investment in quality and inclusive education with focus on women and girls will not only protect and promote women's rights, but it will also improve women's labour force participation and their employment prospects thus contributing to prosperity. This will also have positive impact on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights outcomes. Investment in inclusive education will also improve employment prospects for persons with disabilities.

Stronger SDG financial architecture and integrated policies and its coherence likewise cuts across all outcomes and would contribute to accelerated progress across all SDGs notably the ones lagging behind.

The mechanisms to bring out the synergies and linkages would be UNSDCF Results Groups and thematic and support groups that would regularly report to the UNCT on these issues.

2.5 Sustainability

A key contributor to sustainability is that the UNSDCF has been designed in consultation with the Government and other national stakeholders who actively participated in the strategic prioritisation process to collectively formulate the shared development vision and strategic priorities thus building strong ownership. The UNSDCF is closely aligned with the national priorities as articulated in the Vision-2050, particularly Phase-1 (2021-2030), which coincides with the 2030 Agenda. The country fully owns and leads the 2030 Agenda and has taken steps towards nationalisation of the SDG indicators and targets in the national and sub-national development planning. The ownership and commitment of the Government of Mongolia to the 2030 Agenda are evident. The UN supported the Government in their deft COVID-19 health and socio-economic response measures which further strengthened the mutual trust and tested the sustainability of the institutional mechanism for SDG progress. As the Government works towards recovery from the pandemic, the UN will promote resilience and sustainability, key guiding principles for UN programming, for "building forward better".

UN will contribute to sustainability through continued capacity building of institutions at national and sub-national levels. With a view to help the Government to meet the human rights and gender equality obligations and those under the multilateral environmental agreements, the UN will contribute to setting up / strengthening institutional mechanisms through technical support and build monitoring and reporting capacities for sustainability beyond 2027. Compliance with the human rights and gender equality, obligations, through capacity building of institutions, will ensure that the rights of the vulnerable groups are not infringed and there is sustained improvement in the rights of the vulnerable people in line with the "leave no one behind" as the key guiding principle.

Implementation of the INFF would be a major contributor to sustainability of results. By building capacities of key actors in the SDG-aligned policy making, budgeting, and financing, UN will contribute to building a more comprehensive picture of the whole range of public and private sector finances. This would allow policy makers to also tap innovative finance instruments from the public and private sector linked to the taxonomy developed which is now being expanded to include broader SDG-aligned bankable economic activities.

Policy coherence and evidence-based policy-making cut across all outcomes under the UNSDCF and strengthened capacity for disaggregated data collection, analysis and use would contribute to more informed decision-making and thus sustainable results.

UN's convening power will help to forge a shared vision that would contribute to sustainability as the partners work as a coalition generating synergies, avoiding duplication and not in competition with each other.

Khongor sand. Umnugovi aimag. Photo credit: B.Bayar

Lake Khuvsgul is the deepest freshwater lake in Mongolia, equal to 0.4 percent of the world's freshwater. Photo credit: B.Bayar

2.6 Cross-border and regional cooperation

The high dependence of Mongolia on exports of coal and minerals to a largely undiversified export destinations and the country's landlocked status with infrastructural bottlenecks makes it imperative for the country to vigorously pursue regional cooperation. Closure of borders with China for long periods due to the pandemic which severely impacted Mongolia's economy further highlighted the need for cross-border cooperation. The cross-border nature of economic and environmental issues, including transboundary crop and animal diseases, sand and dust storms, desertification, transboundary water management, and other environmental health issues, also make it imperative to work with a regional perspective.

Enhanced cross-border cooperation is key to optimize the overall benefits of migration by facilitating safe, orderly, and regular migration, while reducing the incidence and negative impact of irregular migration through international cooperation within and among countries of origin, transit and destination as called for by the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) which Mongolia adopted and supports. The UN is well positioned to assist in this area including by providing UN system-wide support to Mongolia's implementation of the GCM through the newly established UN Network on Migration in Mongolia.

The absence of strong and active formal regional institutions leaves the door open for specific sectoral collaborations driven by mutual interests. Mongolia has to keep its international reputation especially on peaceful and democratic transition, free and fair elections, and respect for human rights. Mongolia stands to benefit from regional cooperation in a number of areas such as trade, transport connectivity, environment, water, disaster risk reduction, migration, energy, resilience network, vital statistics, digital transformation, tourism, among others. Mongolia's active participation in joining regional agreements, including the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), and other cooperation frameworks on connectivity demonstrates Mongolia's desire to further elevate its role as a key regional player, maximizing the potential of being a transit country.

UN in Mongolia will collaborate with regional organisations and work in line with agreed frameworks including on cross-border crime and illicit financial flows as well as accelerating the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries. UN will provide knowledge and share information on country experience for Mongolia to leverage in addressing transboundary issues, including through south-south and triangular cooperation. Joining trade and economic integration in the region and the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor are among the regional priorities mentioned in the Vision-2050 document.

2.7 UNCT Comparative Advantage and Configuration

The UN Country Team in Mongolia currently comprises 9 resident and 14 non-resident agencies, funds and programmes. In all, 23 UN entities are signing the UNSDCF[15]. The UN Country Team is the key inter-agency decision-making and coordinating body on programmes and operational matters. The UNSDCF leads the UNCT to deliver on the vision and the outcomes of the UNSDCF, reports progress to the Government of Mongolia, and other stakeholders, through the Joint Steering Committee and, with the UNCT, makes course corrections, as necessary.

With a view to (1) Ensure that the UN system in Mongolia is appropriately positioned and has the necessary capacities, resources and business models to deliver on the UNSDCF and collective promise to leave no one behind; and (2) Enhance coordination transparency, efficiency and impact of UN development activities, aligned to national development priorities in the Vision -2050 of Mongolia and related medium and short-term national development programs and plans, a review of the UNCT configuration was carried out in accordance with the principle of "needs-based, tailored country presence" called for in the UN development system repositioning resolution[16].

The configuration process followed a participatory approach and the UN entities were first asked to make a self-assessment of their capacities in multiple areas including thematic policy expertise, expertise in international norms and standards, advisory capacity for policy formulation and implementation, capacity in knowledge management and sharing, capacity to connect and engage networks and partnerships (national and international), communications and advocacy capacity, project and programme implementation capacity, and M&E capacity. The UN entities were also asked to respond to questions on their business models and if they were planning any change. The information collected through the questionnaire was presented to UNCT. The configuration was also presented by RC to and endorsed by the Government of Mongolia.

The UNCT configuration results, that were presented to and endorsed by the Government of Mongolia, demonstrated that the UN family in Mongolia represents the individual and collective strength of technical expertise, knowledge, experience and trust of the Government and other stakeholders to deliver on the commitments made in the Cooperation Framework. The UN entities have strong back up from their respective regional offices, and headquarters, which can be leveraged for knowledge, resources, and technical expertise. UN has been a long-standing partner of the Government and has the trust and positioning to respond to the national development challenges. As the custodian of international human rights norms and values, UN is best placed to advocate for and mainstream rights-based approach to development leaving no one behind. UN's support to development coordination and convening of development discourse engaging a wide array of stakeholders and UN Resident Coordinator's presence as the only international member at the NCSD are its inherent strengths to be leveraged for achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Given its regional and global presence, the UN also contributes to cross-border partnerships and collaboration. The UN has been quick to respond to national needs, including emergencies, as evidenced by the UN response to COVID-19 outbreak and harsh winters (dzuds).

While there were some areas of common interest identified (i.e. quality social services, green economy, renewable energy, digitalization, climate change, youth empowerments, human rights, gender and good governance), the UNCT did not perceive any significant overlaps that may affect the UN System configuration for the UNSDCF Mongolia. Based on the feedback received from the Government of Mongolia, UNCT will further strengthen its work on trade and

[15] These are: FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITC, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNDRR, UNEP, UNESCAP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV, UN Women, WHO.
[16] UN General Assembly resolution 72/279, paragraph 2.

disaster risk management by leveraging knowledge and experience of UNCT in support of the national priorities. Moreover, participation in the regional Issue-Based Coalitions provide opportunities for building synergies in the areas of common interest. Overall, the UNCT will work for greater synergies in mainstreaming of human rights and gender equality as the key programming principles and cross-cutting issues in the new CF.

The UNCT will enhance its response to the emerging situation and ensure synergies within the system and with other development partners. Particular attention will be on the non-resident UN entities to ensure their full involvement in the implementation of the UNSDCF. UN will enhance coordination and synergies across Results Groups. UN will encourage Issue-Based Coalitions (IBCs) to develop a guidance, drawing also on best international practices, on how to respond to challenges going beyond the individual agencies' mandates in order to increase synergies. UNCT will particularly engage with IBCs on climate change and building resilience and other relevant areas. The capacity in the RC Office will be strengthened to help improve coordination support to the groups. UN will work cost-efficiently by undertaking joint programmes and making use of joint operations where feasible. The UNCT will take stock of its configuration as needed but UN entities commit to inform UNCT if any changes in configuration take place meanwhile that may affect their delivery of results under the Cooperation Framework.

3 CHAPTER

COOPERATION FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Signing of the UNSDCF 2023-2027. From left: Tapan Mishra, UN Resident Coordinator, B.Battsetseg, Minister for Foreign Affairs and B.Javkhlan, Acting Minister for Economic Development and Minister for Finance. Photo credit: UNRCO Mongolia

3.1 Governance

3.1.1 Overall coordination

The overall coordination and focal body for the UNSDCF in Mongolia will be the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Individual UN agencies, funds, and programmes (both resident and non-resident) will work through their respective line Ministries / Agencies of the Government under the coordination of the UN Resident Coordinator within the UN Management and Accountability Framework (MAF). The UN in Mongolia will align its work with its normative mandate as enshrined in the UN Charter and work towards more integrated development solutions leaving no one behind, strengthening national ownership and accountability, mainstreaming the Guiding Principles of UN programming.

3.1.2 Joint Steering Committee

The strategic guidance to the Cooperation Framework will be provided by the Joint National-UN Steering Committee (JSC) co-chaired by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia and the UN Resident Coordinator on behalf of the UN Country Team in Mongolia. The JSC will also monitor and review implementation progress of the UNSDCF. The JSC will comprise representatives of the Government ministries and agencies and members of the UNCT. Other partners such as the IFIs, bilateral development partners, representatives of private sector and civil society organizations may be invited on ad hoc basis.

The JSC will meet twice a year to take stock of the progress and alignment of the UNSDCF with evolving national priorities and regional and international development contexts. The JSC will monitor progress, challenges, and opportunities, undertake risk assessments, and provide guidance on course corrections if required. The JSC will also review the resources available for funding the UNSDCF and leverage opportunities for development financing for the 2030 Agenda in the country. The annual progress report for review by JSC will be prepared under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator and with the UNCT in consultation with the relevant Government counterparts and presented to JSC by the UN Resident Coordinator with supports made. The process will be supported by the Chairs of the Results groups. The annual progress report will be based on the Joint Work Plans of the Results Groups and Thematic Groups.

3.2 Cooperation Framework Management Structure

3.2.1 UN Country Team (UNCT)

UNCT is the main inter-agency mechanism in Mongolia for inter-agency collaboration, coherence, and decision-making. It is led by the Resident Coordinator and composed of UN entities, resident and non-resident, which are signatories to the UNSDCF. UNSDCF agreed with the Government is the most important instrument for the planning and implementation of UN-Mongolia development priorities in the country. UNCT members remain accountable to their respective entities on individual mandates and to the Resident Coordinator for their contribution to joint results as defined in the UNSDCF.

UNCT will meet at least once a month enabling also the participation of non-resident UN entities.

Participants at the signing ceremony of the UNSDCF for Mongolia 2023-2027. Photo credit: UNRCO Mongolia

3.2.2 Results Groups

The implementation of the UNSDCF will be technically supported by the Results Groups, constituted at the Strategic Priority level, that are integral to the UNSDCF implementation. Under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, the Results Groups will facilitate UN system-wide coherence to analysis, planning, implementation, and monitoring, as well as communications for contributing to the relevant strategic priority and outcome. These are inter-agency groups comprising experts from the UN entities represented in the UNCT, both resident and non-resident, and also Government representatives from the relevant line ministries / departments. Additional external members may be engaged if deemed appropriate.

Each Results Group will be chaired by head of one of the UN agencies. The Chair shall rotate among UN agencies on an annual basis. The RG can be co-chaired by the relevant Government Ministries and Agencies. The Results Groups will meet ideally four times in a year (once in a quarter).

One Results Group will be set up for each strategic priority area. As there are three strategic priority areas under the UNSDCF, the

UNCT will set up three Results Groups to support the implementation of the UNSDCF as follows:

These groups will identify, and report to UNCT, potential synergies and overlaps between agencies and thus contribute to enhanced development outcomes. The Results Groups will be primarily responsible for preparing and updating Joint Work Plans and funding framework for achieving the UNSDCF outputs. The Results Groups will identify opportunities for joint UN programming and advocacy, challenges, and new learning during the implementation of the UNSDCF. They will regularly monitor results, evolving country context, and risks and recommend course corrections to the UNCT for delivery of results in the UNSDCF, amending Joint Work Plans as needed.

The Results Groups will prepare the Annual Performance Review before the Joint Steering Committee meeting. They will ensure that the information related to the JWP, and implementation progress is kept updated in the UN Info on a monthly basis. The Results Groups should work with the MEL Group (mentioned in the next section) to deliver on MEL Plan and share the key results with the UN Communications Group for joint communications and advocacy. The Theme Groups (mentioned in the next section) will contribute to mainstreaming the guiding principles including "leaving no one behind" in the Results Groups and supporting that these principles are uniformly adhered to by the UN agencies.

The Resident Coordinator will engage the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD), which is a government led, multi-stakeholder body to review the sustainable development agenda in the country and share the UNSDCF results and other knowledge products with the NCSD. The Results Groups may align with any working groups that the Government may have created under the Vision 2050 and associated action plans.

In addition, UNCT may consider establishing a Programme Oversight Team to provide oversight and quality assurance to the implementation of the UNSDCF. This Team will also ensure that the LNOB principle is consistently applied and mainstreamed in the UNSDCF.

Youth participating in the "Transforming Education" dialogue. 2022 Photo credit: UNRCO Mongolia

3.2.3 UN Thematic and Programme Support Groups

The following thematic and programme support groups further support UNCT in the implementation of the Cooperation Framework.

Thematic Working Groups

GENDER THEME GROUP

The Gender Theme Group will continue and expand efforts on mainstreaming of gender equality and women's empowerment in the UNSDCF at all stages. Additionally, this Group will also initiate the Gender Equality SWAP Score Card assessment which establishes an accountability system and promotes stronger coordination among UN entities for gender equality and women's empowerment. The responsibility of the Gender Theme Group may also include Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) within UN, among Implementing partners. The GTG will be chaired either by RCO or head of one of the UN entities and will be composed of gender focal points from all UN entities. Other members from civil society or the Government may be included if so decided by UNCT. The GTG will meet at least quarterly.

HUMAN RIGHTS THEME GROUP

The Human Rights Theme Group (HRTG) will support UNCT in promoting the application of human rights-based approaches in the work of the UN, such as the UNSDCF and other frameworks and strategies, and strengthen UN Mongolia's advocacy, programming, operational management, and technical assistance in accordance with international human rights norms and standards. The HRTG will comprise nominated members of the UN entities and will be chaired by the RCO or head of a UN entity. The HRTG will meet at least quarterly.

UN YOUTH GROUP

The UN Youth Group will support the UNCT's strategic engagement with the youth in the country. Given a fact that youth make up almost half of the country's population, UN work in Mongolia will have a strong focus and reach out to the youth. UN Youth group, comprised of focal points from UN agencies signatory to the UNSDCF, will be guided by the UN Youth Strategy 2030. The UN Youth Group will elaborate a joint strategy to better coordinate and guide UNCT's strategic engagement with youth in the country to ensure that youth are empowered to achieve their full potential and make their contributions as agents of change. The UN Youth Group chairing will be on rotational basis by UN entities. The Youth Group will meet at least quarterly.

In addition, the UNCT will also draw upon the knowledge and experience of the multiple other regional and national networks such as the Issue-Based Coalitions in the Asia-Pacific, and the recently established country chapter of the UN Network on Migration aimed at effective, timely and coordinated UN system-wide support to Mongolian government on improving migration management and protection of migrants fostering the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration and SDGs.

The Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) will work closely with the Results Groups and ensure that the UNSDCF has clear LNOB focus. The TWGs will further promote mainstreaming of thematic areas of their mandate (e.g. gender, human rights, youth). This will be achieved through TWG members participating in the meetings of the Results Groups and ensuring mainstreaming of thematic concerns and programming principles (including LNOB, gender equality and women's empowerment, and HRBA). TWGs will support the Results Groups in ensuring that appropriate indicators are included in JWPs to monitor and measure the results. TWGs will also share with the Results Groups and UNCT new data or evidence in their respective thematic areas.

Programme Support Groups

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING GROUP (MEL GROUP)

The MEL Group, chaired by the RCO, will promote coherence and consistency of the M&E plans of individual UN entities with the UNSDCF M&E plan. The MEL Group will collect data for reporting progress on the UNSDCF and will feed it into the UN Info. The Group will suggest course corrections to the Results Framework and MEL Plan if required. It will review the results reports and ensure that data reported is correct. It will compile the annual progress report before every JSC meeting ensuring veracity of data. The MEL Group will support the final evaluation of the UNSDCF making available evidence on each of the results well in advance and in consultation with the Results Groups. The MEL Group will also document good practices and lessons learned in the implementation of the UNSDCF. **The MEL Group will meet quarterly.**

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND PARTNERSHIPS GROUP (RMP GROUP)

The RMP Group will ensure effective and coordinated efforts to mobilize resources and strategic partnerships for the UNSDCF. The Group will be the main driver to establish the Partnerships and Financing Framework for the UNSDCF and will suggest course correction to the Framework when necessary. The RMP Group will strategize and explore coordinated opportunities with a diverse range of potential partners, including private sector entities, development partners including international financial institutions, NGOs (domestic and international), think tanks, and academia, in an effort to unlock additional financial and other resources, technical expertise and capacities to achieve the UNSDCF results. The RMP Group will also discuss key, cross-sector priorities and engage partners who can accelerate progress towards achieving these priorities within the UNSDCF, through a whole of UN approach. The RMP Group will be composed of members nominated by the UN entities and be chaired by the RCO. The RMP Group will meet every month.

OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT TEAM (OMT)

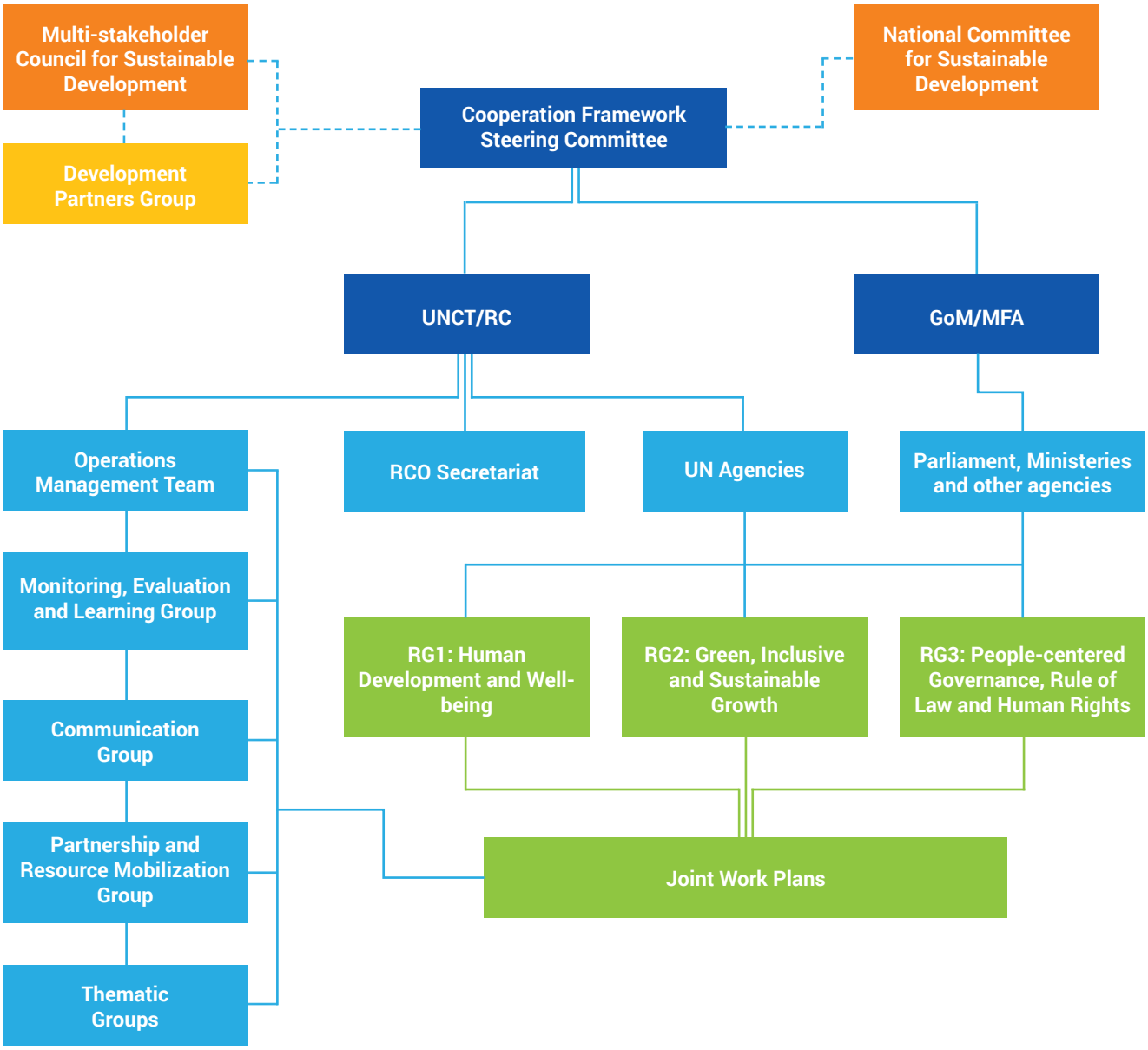
The OMT will comprise operations focal points from the UN entities and provide support and advice to UNCT to improve efficiency in operations by harmonizing business operations. It will explore opportunities for taking up common back-office services, as much as possible, to undertake common procurement, recruitment, logistics, ICT and other services to become cost-efficient. The OMT will meet once every month and be chaired by a resident agency on an annual rotating basis.

UN COMMUNICATIONS GROUP (UNCG)

The UN Communications Group (UNCG) is an integral part of the UN Country Team. UNCG representatives are involved in advocacy of priorities, thematic focus and results of the UNSDCF. UN Global Communications Strategy requires the UNCTs to "communicate together", conveying the UN's joint work on the complex and interrelated SDGs in a coherent, powerful, and non-siloed way under this new generation of the UNSDCF. Therefore, the UNCG will support the UNCT in cohesive and joint UN communications and advocacy, including sharing information to draw attention to, and advocate for, priority national development issues and policies to help accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda in the country. UNCG will develop a new joint communications strategy and a workplan to support the UNSDCF. The UNCG will receive adequate budget and resources for producing high-quality communications products and organising UN public events to create awareness and enhance visibility. UNCG will comprise communications focal points from the UN entities, signatory to this UNSDCF, to mirror the UNCT composition including non-resident entities. UNCG will be chaired by RCO and meet on a monthly basis.

The thematic groups will coordinate their activities with other UNCT thematic / working groups., Thematic groups will aim to build synergies with other UNCT groups relevant to their programmes and actions.

The management arrangements for the UNSDCF are presented in the following graphic:



3.3 Resourcing the Cooperation Framework

The issue of funding the Cooperation Framework will be aligned with the larger issue of SDG financing and this exercise will be conducted after signing the UNSDCF. UN funds under the UNSDCF will be catalytic in nature and used to mobilise other innovative and non-conventional sources of funds. With support from the RMP Group, UNCT will explore funding opportunities for the joint UN programmes through multiple thematic funds e.g., Joint SDG Fund, UN-Partnerships of the Rights of the Persons with Disability (PRPD) Fund (through MPTF). These resources will complement the existing much larger financial resources for the SDGs (public and private, internal, and external). UN funding will also be based on an assessment of, and potential for leveraging, the contributions of other development partners and private sector. Working closely with the Ministry of Finance and other stakeholders, UN in Mongolia will build capacities to formulate and implement INFF for improving allocation of resources towards SDGs and national priorities in line with the 2030 Agenda and Vision -2050.

UN entities signing the UNSDCF will provide support to the UNCT in development and implementation of activities within the UNSDCF, which may include technical support, capacity building, cash assistance, supplies, commodities and equipment, procurement services, transport, funds for advocacy, research and studies, consultancies, programme development, monitoring and evaluation, training activities and staff support. Part of the UN system entities' support may be provided to non-governmental and civil society organizations as agreed within the framework of the individual workplans and project documents.

Additional support may include access to UN organization-managed global information systems, the network of the UN system agencies' country offices and specialized information systems, including rosters of consultants and providers of development services, and access to the support provided by the network of UN specialized agencies, funds, and programmes. UN system agencies shall appoint staff and consultants for programme development, programme support, technical assistance, as well as monitoring and evaluation activities.

3.4. Joint Work Plans (JWPs)

The Cooperation Framework in Mongolia will be operationalized through the Joint Work Plans (JWPs) which will be prepared on an annual basis jointly by the UN and endorsed by the Government. The JWP will comprehensively capture the Cooperation Framework outcomes, outputs, activities, and resources on a yearly basis, SDG targets and indicators, and gender and human rights markers. The JWP will be prepared jointly by all UNCT entities (resident and non-resident) in each Results Group and entered in the online system UN Info.

The JWPs form the basis for preparing the Annual Performance Review and Annual Country Results Report by the Results Groups. The JWPs will be aligned with the SDG framework and national priorities of Mongolia and will undergo annual reviews to gauge progress made and suggest course corrections, if any, in light of evolving country context. The outputs in the JWP should be jointly owned by and reflect the aggregate of sub-outputs (or activities) which are the individual "agency contributions" to the output for which they are accountable.

To the extent possible, the UN system agencies and partners will use the minimum documents necessary namely the signed UNSDCF, signed joint or agency-specific workplans and project documents to implement programmatic initiatives. However, as necessary, and appropriate, project documents can be prepared using, inter alia, the relevant text from the UNSDCF and joint or agency-specific workplans and/or project documents.

3.5 Business Operations Strategy (BOS)

BOS provides an opportunity for UNCT Mongolia to improve operational efficiency and reduce cost of operations towards achieving sustainability goals and the UNSDCF results. The Operations Management Team (OMT) will work to carry out joint activities, concentrating on a collaborative approach and increasing effectiveness of UN operations. Building on the past achievements, UN will continue to work towards reducing administrative costs through better use of resources – human and financial. Through the Business Operations Strategy, the OMT has identified 3 common services for further scale up. To facilitate the common business operations, the OMT will be working closely with the Programme on the implementation of joint common activities in the area of Finance, Human Resources, Procurement, ICT, and Administration which will meet programmatic needs, looking into new opportunities for collaboration that have SDG impact, and discovering new ways of working together effectively, which will further support and contribute to the UNSDCF implementation.

4
CHAPTER

CCA UPDATE, MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING PLAN

4.1 Monitoring implementation of the Joint Work Plans

The UN Common Country Analysis is a living document and will be annually updated in light of fresh data available, or change in the country's development context. The task will be undertaken by the Task Force, chaired by the RCO that was established to prepare the CCA for this document and will work under the overall direction of UNCT with support from the Results and Thematic Groups and MEL Group.

Under the UNSDCF, an inter-agency Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Group (MEL) has been set up that will be the custodian of the MEL Plan throughout the implementation of UNSDCF. The Group will support the UNCT in regular monitoring of the UNSDCF. More specifically, the Group will:

1. Establish the baselines, indicators, data collection needs and means of verification;
2. Support the Results Groups in regular monitoring of results using the M&E framework;
3. Coordinate agency-specific data collection;
4. Undertake analysis and staff M&E capacity development activities;
5. Support regular reviews and reporting of Cooperation Framework;
6. Ensure that the monitoring and evaluation functions are aligned with the guiding principles notably gender equality, human rights and LNOB and for this purpose MEL group may include members from other thematic groups;
7. Suggest innovative means to collect data such as mobile-based / digital technologies to collect real-time disaggregated data as necessary; and
8. Document and disseminate lessons learned and good practices during the implementation with the involvement of UNCG.

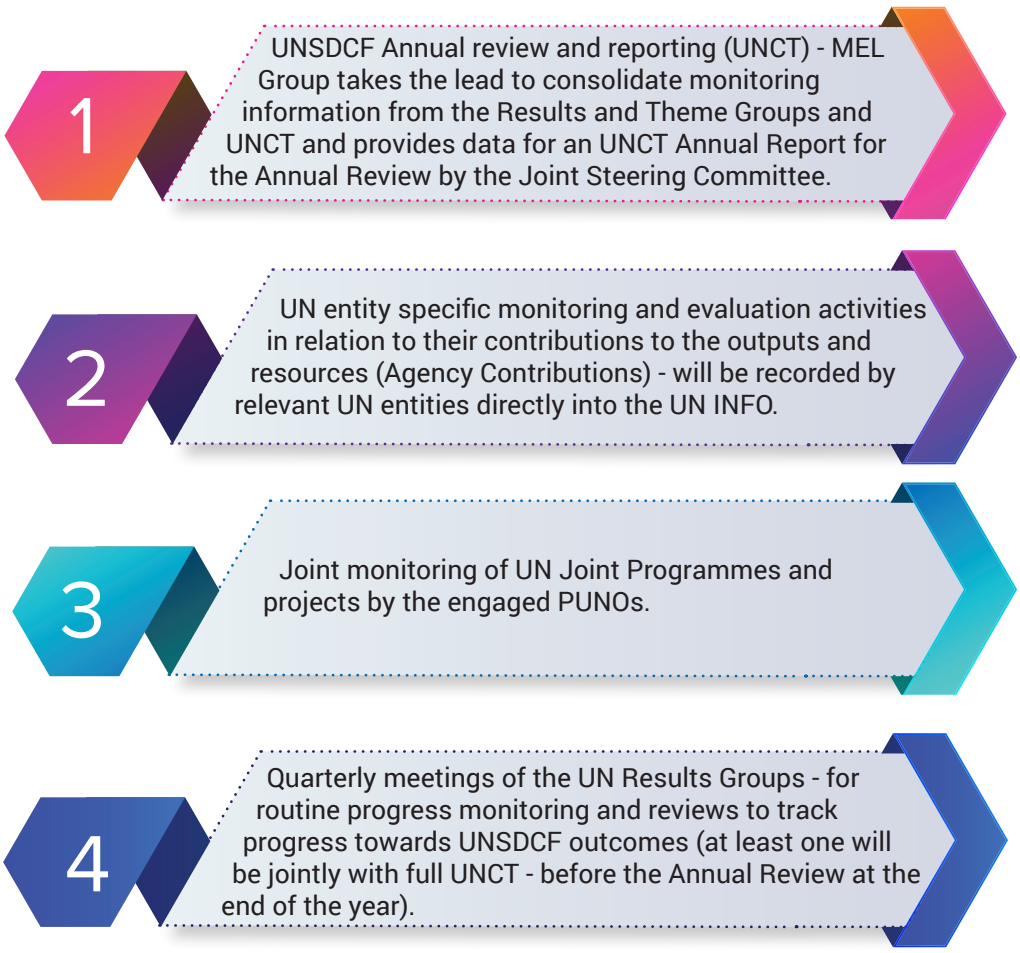
Results Framework indicators are well-aligned with the nationalised SDG indicators framework (still to be adopted) and are the ones where regular and reliable, disaggregated data is available from the national sources. UNCT will complement the national data sources from the evidence generated during the implementation of the Cooperation Framework, including information from the surveys, interviews, discussions etc.

The MEL Group draws upon the expertise from across the UN agencies whose M&E plans should feed into the UNSDCF MEL Plan. The. Gender Theme Group (GTG) will additionally support the monitoring of gender equity results.

Disaggregated data for monitoring and reporting on the performance of the Cooperation Framework will be collected from multiple sources such as National Statistical Office (NSO), MICS, Voluntary National Reviews, national reports to the human rights mechanisms (treaty bodies, UPR, updates on the recommendations of the Special Procedures), concluding observations of the UN Treaty Bodies, UPR working group reports, data emerging from the UN entities projects, reports of the multiple surveys led by different UN agencies, and global reports and indices.

Monitoring will be a regular and continuous exercise with a view to track progress towards planned results and draw lessons and course-correct Joint Working Plans where necessary, in consultation with the government.

The key elements of the monitoring of the Cooperation Framework will be as follows:



4.2 Monitoring Risks and Opportunities

The monitoring mechanisms will keep UNCT informed of the emerging risks to the achievement of the UNSDCF results and opportunities. The key risks relate to the highly undiversified economy dependent on export of extractives making it very vulnerable to global price fluctuations affecting the entire economy; very high (around 90 percent) dependence on Russia for oil imports putting macroeconomic pressure and posing risks for a reduction in real output and a higher financing cost in the medium-term; increasing foreign debt and fiscal instability; unsustainable exploitation of natural resources; disaster risks (such as dzud); regional economic slowdown and its spill over; new waves of the pandemic; slow governance progress; presence of corruption; gender inequality; lack of meaningful participation and capacities of CSOs; frequent staff turnover in the government and loss of institutional memory; and decreasing donor support as Mongolia moves up in its DAC/WB classification.

The risk mitigation strategy is to include alignment of UNSDCF with the national priorities; strong broad-based partnership; encouraging government cost-sharing; embedding capacities in the government; and UN flexibility and ability to respond quickly to emerging situation. UN will comply with the social, including gender, human rights, and environmental standards to ensure that there is no unintended harm.

The UN will build on the key opportunities including a young population, highly educated females; abundance of natural resources; ; high mobility; relative political stability; democratic institutions and decision-making; strong political commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs; opportunities offered by cross-border and regional cooperation; expanding private sector; and digital transformation opportunity.

4.3 Annual Performance Review and the Country Results Reporting

The Joint Steering Committee will review the annual performance of the UNSDCF based on a report jointly coordinated by the RCO and prepared by the UNCT, with support from the governance structures (Results Groups, Theme Groups, and MEL Group), with the Government. The report is an integration of the results reported by the UNCT entities including those not physically located in the country. This report will document lessons learned and will feed into the learning plan of the UNCT. The report will draw upon the national disaggregated data sources and triangulate with the evidence emerging from the implementation of UNSDCF.

The JSC will review the UNSDCF results against the planned results as per the JWP. During the review, JSC will recommend course corrections, if any, to the strategies, results and resources or implementation arrangements to make the UNSDCF more effective.

The annual performance review will be shared with the key stakeholders including the government, implementing partners, development partners, private sector, and civil society. This will be communicated to wider audience and be available in public domain.

The annual performance review will also feed into the Government's own thematic and sector reviews, deliberations of the NCSD and will be useful in preparing the VNR. The annual performance review will also support identifying key communications milestones.

4.4 Evaluation plan

A terminal evaluation of the UNSDCF will be conducted in the penultimate year of the UNSDCF cycle in consultation with the Government. This evaluation will document lessons learned that would feed into the next UNSDCF cycle. This evaluation will also be an accountability mechanism of UN in Mongolia towards the Government and the people.

The evaluation will be independent and conducted along the DAC evaluation criteria to gauge relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and potential impact. It will be conducted in an inclusive and participatory manner involving, among others, discussions with the relevant population groups to assess the influence on their lives.

It will use modern information collection tools and techniques, where feasible, and follow the UN Evaluation Group's norms and standards.

Individual UN entity evaluations will also inform the final evaluation of the Cooperation Framework and, where possible, combine the consultations to reduce the evaluation processes. The final evaluation report will be available in the public domain. The MEL Group created for Cooperation Framework will support the UNCT in organising the evaluation.

ANNEX 1:
RESULTS FRAMEWORK

STRATEGIC VISION **By 2030, all people in Mongolia over their life course benefit from shared prosperity characterized by inclusive, resilient and sustainable development, as well as healthy and safe environment; and thrive in a cohesive society based on rule of law and human rights.**

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

Impact:

National development priorities

Vision 2050 [17]:

2. Groom a healthy, socially active Mongolian through creation of an enabling environment where everyone leads a happy life enjoying social protection as an assurance of quality life and having access to quality education - the foundation for the country's development and a secure family life.
   - 2.1. Provide equal opportunity to receive a quality education for all, establish education as a basis for personal development, family security, and the country's development and strengthen the life-long education system.
   - 2.2. Nurture citizens with healthy habits and active lifestyle and evolve a quality, accessible and efficient health system.
   - 2.5. Create a healthy, comfortable, and favourable living environment and ensure safe food provision.
   - 2.6. Ensure labour economy balance, build a knowledge economy and provide every citizen with a job and income.
   - 2.7. Protect Mongolians' gene pool, strengthen capabilities for risk-prevention and support human development of Mongolians
3. Sustainably increase family income by promoting employment, cultivate active and creative families with adequate housing, develop middle class able to run competitive micro, small, and medium businesses in an enabling investment environment and capable of sustaining their families; and supported with satisfying living conditions.
   - 3.1. Develop life-guaranteeing social protection services and strengthen the social insurance system to improve the quality of life.
   - 3.5. Encourage citizens and families with an active lifestyle and create an enabling environment for physical culture and sports.
5. Build smart and sustainable governance ensuring human development, mature civil service with optimal administrative and organizational structure, fully functional and people-centred state e-services, enhance cooperation between state, private sector, and civil society in all areas, ensure full respect for human rights, fair justice and corruption-free country.
   - 5.4. Enhance specialized, competent, transparent, effective, and smart civil service that serves citizens.

[17] The Government of Mongolia (Resolution 52, 2020). "Vision-2050" Long-Term Development Policy of Mongolia. Retrieved from https://cabinet.gov.mn/wp-content/uploads/2050_VISION_LONG-TERM-DEVELOPMENT-POLICY.pdf

6. Promote an environmentally friendly green development, maintain balance of ecosystem, ensure an environmental sustainability, create conditions for present and future generations to reap its benefits, and improve the quality of human life.
   6.3. Prevent water scarcity, accumulate surface water and create conditions to fully meet needs.
   6.4. Contribute to international efforts to mitigate climate change by developing a low emission, productive and inclusive green economy.
7. Ensure human and societal security through strengthening national defence capacity, protecting human rights and freedoms, preserving social order and safety of the living environment of citizens, and reducing disaster risks.
   7.3. Enhance the capacity to reduce, prevent and mitigate the potential risks of non-traditional threats and increase the safety of people and society.
9. Develop a comfortable, environmentally friendly, people-centered, and smart city.
   9.1. Become a city of healthy, creative, and intelligent citizens with a high labour value, providing opportunities for development of its citizens.
   9.2. Develop a comfortable city with balanced ecosystem, low greenhouse gas emissions and green technologies, and ensure a healthy and safe living environment for citizens.

National development priorities

CAREC; China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor; Northeast Asia Super Grid; Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement; Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific *https://www.unescap.org/kp/2021/action-plan-strengthen-regional-cooperation-social-protection-asia-and-pacific*

SDGs and Targets:

Goal 1	End poverty (Targets 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.a);
Goal 2	Achieve food security and promote sustainable agriculture (Targets 2.1.1 & 1.2., 3.4, 3.9.2);
Goal 3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages (Targets 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.9.2, 3.8);
Goal 4	Promote quality education (Targets 4.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.7, 4.a.1);
Goal 5	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (Target 5.b);
Goal 6	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (Targets 6.1, 6.2);
Goal 7	Introduction of renewable energy (Target 7.1);
Goal 8	Economic growth and decent jobs (Target 8.5);
Goal 9	Improve infrastructure and foster innovation (Targets 9.1, 9.c);
Goal 10	Reduce inequality (Target 10.7);
Goal 11	Make cities and human settlements inclusive and friendly (Target 11.2);
Goal 12	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns (Target 12.8)
Goal 13	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts (Targets 13.3, 13b)
Goal 16	Building peace and justice (Target 16.2).

Key Partners:

- Deputy Prime Minister's office
- Cabinet Secretariat
- Ministry of Construction and Urban Development
- Ministry of Economy and Development
- Ministry of Education and Science
- Ministry of Environment and Tourism
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry
- Ministry of Justice and Internal Affairs
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Labor and Social Protection
- National Statistics office
- National Emergency Management Agency
- National Human Right Commission
- National Committee on Gender Equality
- Judicial General Council
- Authority for Family, Child and Youth Development
- Local governments
- Mongolian Employers' Federation
- Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions
- Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- CSOs
- Private sector
- Academia
- Asian Development Bank
- Bi-lateral donors
- European Union
- International NGOs
- United States Agency for International Development
- World Bank

Contributing UN agencies:

FAO, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDRR, UNESCAP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV and WHO

Strategic Priority 1: Human development and Well-being

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target (Cooperation Framework end)	Data source/MoV	Assumptions
Outcome 1: By 2027, people in urban and rural areas, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, equally realize their full human potential and benefit from inclusive, rights-based, gender- and shock-responsive health and nutrition, education, social protection, WASH and other services	1.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by region and aimag [SDG 1.2.1]	27.8 (2020)	20.0%	NSO, Household socio-economic survey	Government is committed and allocates adequate budget for health, education, and social protection COVID pandemic is contained and there is no further spread of cases There are no hurdles in cross-border movement of goods and services
	1.2 Proportion of households that encounter moderate or severe food insecurity in the population[18] [SDG 2.1.2]	26.18% (2018-2020)	23.8%	Survey on actual food consumption of the population, MUST, NSO, Section of household food consumption in the household socio-economic survey	
	1.3 Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births) [SDG 3.1.1]	30.2[19] (2020)	20	Activity report of aimag and capital city health organizations HR-201, Health Development Center (HDC)	
	1.4 Under-5 mortality rate (per 1000 live births) [SDG 3.2.1]	14[20] (2020)	12		
	1.5 Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3; and (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex [SDG 4.1.1]	Grades 2/3 Reading All 44.4% (2018)	48.4%	Quality Assessment, Education Evaluation Center (EAC) Sample survey of social indicators, NSO	There is investment in infrastructure and digital transformation for effective service delivery There is no fiscal crunch that could limit the space for government to provide services
		Male 42.8% (2018)	46.8%		
		Female 46.2% (2018)	50.2%		
		Math All 33.6% (2018)	37.6%		
		Male 34.9% (2018)	38.9%		
		Female 32.2% (2018)	36.2%		
		Last grade of primary education. Reading All 67.0% (2018)	70%		
		Male 68.0% (2018)	70%		
		Female 66.2% (2018)	70%		
		Math All 61.3% (2018)	63%		
		Male 65.6% (2018)	67%		
		Female 57.6% (2018)	60%		

[18] FAO. (n.d.). Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from https://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/indicators/212/en/

[19] World Health Organisation and National Center for Health Development (2020). Health Indicator. Retrieved from http://hdc.gov.mn/media/uploads/2021-08/Eruul_mendiin_uzuulelt_2020.pdf

[20] NSO (n.d.). Sustainable Development Goals of Mongolia. Retrieved from http://sdg.gov.mn/

Output 1.1 The capacities are in place to promote integrated healthcare system to deliver universal, affordable and quality healthcare (physical, mental, sexual and reproductive), including nutrition and WASH, that is gender-responsive and resilient to shocks

[UN entities: FAO, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDRR, UNESCAP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV and WHO]

Output 1.2 Education system and institutions have the capacity to offer inclusive learning, including early childhood education, sustainable development education, to all children and young people, life skills, comprehensive sexuality education and smooth transition from education to labour market, especially to the vulnerable, including in emergency situations

[UN entities: ITU, OHCHR, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNV]

Output 1.3 Social and child protection policies and system (social insurance, social assistance, and labour market interventions) improves in equity, coverage, shock-resilience and sustainability to protect vulnerable population groups

[UN entities: FAO, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNESCO, UN-Habitat, UNICEF and UNV]

Output 1.4 The capacities are in place to deliver universal, affordable, and quality water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services that is climate-resilient and gender-responsive

[UN entities: OHCHR, UNDRR, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNOPS, UNV, WHO]

Output 1.5 The capacities are in place to protect, promote and support adequate access to nutritious foods and healthy diets to all people, with particular focus on vulnerable population groups

[UN entities: FAO, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNV, WHO]

Output 1.6 Institutions and capacities are strengthened to enable the accessible, inclusive, multi-sectoral and quality gender-based violence response mechanisms in a more cohesive society with increased respect for and realization of gender equality and human rights, including migrant rights.

[UN entities: IOM, OHCHR, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNODC, UNV, WHO]

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: GREEN, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Impact:

National development priorities

Vision 2050:

2.5. Create a healthy, comfortable, and favourable living environment and ensure safe food provision.

2.6. Ensure labour economy balance, build a knowledge economy and provide every citizen with a job and income;

3.3. Render employment support, develop business know-how and skills, and raise the competitiveness of SMEs;

3.6. Ensure equality, justice, national economic security and sustainable development by implementing smart and citizen-centered governance and management system of land;

4.1. Promote macroeconomic stability and transform the middle class into a predominant group;

4.2. Create an export-oriented economy through promoting development of priority sectors;

4.4. Join the economic and trade integration in the region and facilitate trade;

4.5. Develop internationally competitive MSMEs and increase employment;

4.6. Establish an internationally recognized wealth fund to support the objectives of economic diversification, innovation, human development, new technology and green growth;

6.1. Evaluate and protect the value and benefits of nature and maintain a balance of primary ecosystems.

6.2. Rehabilitate natural resources, reduce scarcity, create productive resources and pass on to future generations.

6.3. Prevent water scarcity, accumulate surface water and create conditions to fully meet needs.

6.4. Contribute to international efforts to mitigate climate change by developing a low emission, productive and inclusive green economy.

8.1. Prepare fundamental conditions for rapid economic growth by fully connecting to the regional economic integration through an integrated infrastructure network;

8.2. Develop regional and local tourism based on leading economic sectors and location advantages;

8.3. Develop agriculture as a leading sector of the economy that is environmentally friendly, adaptable to climate change, resilient, responsive to social development trends, needs and requirements, responsible, highly productive and sustainable;

9.2. Develop a comfortable city with balanced ecosystem, low greenhouse gas emissions and green technologies, and ensure a healthy and safe living environment for citizens.

9.5. Develop satellite cities that create national tourism, cultural services and industries reflecting unique national features, and serve as transport, logistics and international hubs in Northeast Asia.

Regional Frameworks:

CAREC; China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor; Northeast Asia Super Grid; Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (https://www.unescap.org/kp/cpta), Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network https://www.unescap.org/our-work/transport/asian-highway-network Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network https://www.unescap.org/our-work/transport/trans-asian-railway-network, Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports https://www.unescap.org/our-work/transport/dry-ports-and-intermodal-transport, Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (www.neaspec.org) Asia Pacific Risk and Resilience Network and Portal (https://rrp.unescap.org/)

SDGs and Targets:

Goal 1 End poverty (Targets 1.1, 1.2, 1.4);

Goal 2 Achieve food security and promote sustainable agriculture (Targets 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2a, 2b, 2c);

Goal 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life long learning opportunities for all (Targets 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7)

Goal 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (Targets 5a, 5b);

Goal 6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (Targets 6.1 and 6.2)

Goal 7 Introduction of renewable energy (Targets 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.a, 7.b);

Goal 8 Economic growth and decent jobs (Targets 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8, 8.9, 8.10, 8.a, 8.b);

Goal 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation infrastructure and foster innovation (Targets 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 9.a, 9.b);

Goal 10 Reduce inequality (Targets 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, 10.6, 10.7, 10.a, 10.b);

Goal 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive and friendly (Targets 11.5, 11.a, 11.b);

Goal 12 Promoting responsible consumption (Targets 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 12.5, 12.6, 12.7, 12.8, 12.a, 12.b, 12.c);

Goal 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts (Targets 13.1, 13.2, 13.b)

Goal 15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss (Targets 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 15.6, 15a)

Goal 17 Strengthen partnerships for development (Targets 17.1, 17.2, 17.3, 17.4, 17.5, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.10, 17.11, 17.12, 17.15, 17.16)

Key Partners:

- Ministry of Construction and Urban Development
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Economy and Development
- Ministry of Education and Science
- Ministry of Environment and Tourism
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Labor and Social Protection
- National Statistics office
- Bank of Mongolia
- National Committee on Gender Equality
- Mongolian Employers' Federation
- Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions
- CSOs
- Private sector
- Asian Development Bank
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- European Union
- German Agency for International Cooperation
- International Monetary Fund
- Japan International Cooperation Agency
- Korea International Cooperation Agency
- World Bank

Contributing UN agencies:

FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITC, ITU, OHCHR, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNDRR, UNEP, UNESCAP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV, WHO

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target (Cooperation Framework end)	Data source/ MoV	Assumptions
Outcome 2: By 2027, the Mongolian economy is more diversified, innovative, productive, inclusive, green and geographically balanced enabling decent livelihoods, especially for women and youth, building 21st century skills, and promoting low-carbon development	2.1 Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption [SDG 7.2.1]	3.4% (2018) (World Bank)	12%	MET/SDG dashboard	The government is committed and has the political will to low-carbon pathways and building 'green' economy There are no vested interests that work against low-carbon pathway COVID pandemic is contained and there is no further spread of cases There is no spill over from regional economic slowdown There is adequate investment in infrastructure, new value-chains, innovations and digital transformation The government is committed to and invests in human development and geographically balanced growth There is macroeconomic stability and no fiscal crunch that could limit the space for government to provide services
	2.2 Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person [SDG 8.2.1]	6.3% (2020)	4.2%	NSO/SDG dashboard	
	2.3 Unemployment rate, by location, sex, age, and persons with disabilities [SDG 8.5.2]	7% (2020) By sex: Female -6.7% Male – 7.3% By location: Urban – 8% Rural – 4.6% By age groups: 15-24 -17.9% 25-64 – 5.9% By disability status: With disability -7% Without disability-7.2%	Lower than the baseline* (* there is no national target for this indicator)	NSO/SDG dashboard	
	2.4 Manufacturing value add as a proportion of GDP [SDG 9.2.1]	As proportion of GDP – 10.8% (2019) [Source: UNIDO] As per capita -MNT 900 thousand (2020)	19%	NSO/SDG dashboard	
	2.5 Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP [SDG 9.5.1]	0.55% (2020)	2.5%	NSO/SDG dashboard	
	2.6 E-Government Development Index (EGDI)	Rank: 92 Score: 0.6497 (2020)	Higher than baseline (* there is no national target for this indicator)	UN E-Government Survey	

Output 2.1 There are improved institutional capacities to deliver skilling and reskilling, volunteering opportunities, and entrepreneurship training to women and youth to enhance their productive capacity for decent employment and employability, improve women, youth and marginalized people labour force participation including by better managing internal and international migration

[UN entities: FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNIDO, UNV]

Output 2.2 The policies, strategies and institutions are in place to promote greater diversification and transition of economy, including through creative industry, towards resource efficient and low carbon development, digital transformation, and make it more competitive, technologically innovative, and productive while also transforming the small enterprises towards greener employment, integrating with global value chains, increasing formal participation, resource-efficiency and resilience mitigating any unintended impacts for communities who experience persistent discrimination and marginalization

[UN entities: FAO, ILO, ITC, ITU, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCAP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIDO]

Output 2.3 Government has the capacity to create transparent and predictable investment climate, innovative financing for the private investment in resource efficient and low-carbon development, and policies are in place to promote responsible consumption and production business practices, respect for human rights, without negative social, environmental or equity impact including specifically for the mining sector to promote equitable and fairer tax outcomes, including greater revenue collection through improved tax administration.

[UN entities: FAO, UNDP, UNEP, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNOPS]

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target (Cooperation Framework end)	Data source/ MoV	Assumptions
Outcome 3 By 2027, communities and eco-systems in Mongolia are more resilient to climate change with improved capacity for evidence-informed and gender-responsive sustainable natural resource and environmental management and disaster risk reduction	3.1 The resilience capacity index of local communities [SDG 13.2.1]	40.7	58.7	FAO	The government is committed to strengthen institutional addressing climate change through mitigation and regulatory systems for climate responsive planning adaptation policies, laws and development at national and local level Strategies. COVID pandemic is contained and there is no further spread of cases Short-term economic interests do not dominate the larger climate change and environmental sustainability issues There is adequate enough community-interest/ knowledge/level engagement to address environmental challenges There is political will and understanding the risks to address prevention of disaster and need/importance of taking preventive actions disasters than investing in response Presidents' 1 billion tree planting
	3.2 Forest area as a proportion of total land area [SDG 15.1.1]	7.9% (2019)	8.7%	MoET	
	3.3 Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type [SDG 15.1.2]	Special Areas (17.4), Water Runoff (44.75) Forest Lands (36.8) % (2015)	Special Areas (27), Water Runoff (55) Forest Lands (48.7)%	MoET	
	3.4 Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area [SDG 15.3.1]	Total 13.7% (2015)	13.7%	http://irim-he. namem. gov. mn/?cat =5&type =news & ation= more&id= 246	

Output 3.1	Regulatory systems for climate responsive planning and development strengthened to improve adaptive capacity and reduce socio-economic vulnerabilities and risks including disaster displacement risk [UN entities: FAO, IFAD, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNDP, UNDRR, UNEP, UNESCAP, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNOPS, WHO]
Output 3.2	Strengthen the resilience of resource-dependent herder communities through climate informed use and sustainable management of land, forest, biodiversity and water resources, improved livestock product value chains and effective planning and coordination of emergency response measures. [UN entities: FAO, IFAD, ILO, ITU, OHCHR, UNESCO, UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO, UNOPS]
Output 3.3	Institutions/ Businesses and communities have the capacities and technical knowhow for sustainable management of natural resources and reversing biodiversity loss for improved ecosystem services and capacity to implement benefit sharing mechanism from diversified incomes especially for the herder community from the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge. [UN entities: FAO, IFAD, OHCHR, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCAP, UNESCO, UN-Habitat, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV]

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: PEOPLE-CENTRED GOVERNANCE, RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Impact:

National development priorities

Vision 2050:

3.6. Ensure equality, justice, national economic security and sustainable development by implementing smart and citizen-centered governance and management system on land;

5.1. Optimize the distribution, control and balance of power and foster the stable governance;

5.2. Optimize the functions and power distribution of state administration by clearly defining its structure and organization;

5.3. Develop an effective and efficient e-governance to promote human development;

5.4. Enhance specialized, competent, transparent, effective and smart civil service that serves citizens;

5.5. Establish an appropriate system for ensuring the participation of all relevant stakeholders in national policy development, its planning and implementation by strengthening civil society-private sector-state partnership;

5.6. Reduce corruption and malfeasance crimes by strengthening the national justice system;

7.3. Enhance the capacity to reduce, prevent and mitigate the potential risks of non-traditional threats and increase the safety of people and society;

7.4. Improve legal environment of the law enforcement sector, support its development, improve working conditions, train skilled human resources, and develop its competitiveness;

7.5. Guarantee information integrity, confidentiality and accessibility for the state, citizens, and private sector, and create its competitiveness;

9.3. Develop an internationally competitive metropolis with rapidly developing satellite cities with the proper settlement system based on optimal spatial planning;

9.4. Become a city with a stable legal environment and good governance ensuring city rules and standards;

Regional Frameworks:

Warsaw declaration, ASEM, OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe), APF (Asia and Pacific Forum on Human rights institutions), Regional Action Framework on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/ESCAP_MCCRVS_2021_8_Add.1_ministerial_declaration_English.pdf

SDGs and Targets:

Goal 1 End Poverty (Targets 1.a; 1.b)

Goal 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (Targets 5.1; 5.c)

Goal 8 Economic growth and decent jobs (Targets 8.5, 8.7, 8.8)

Goal 9 Improve infrastructure and foster innovation (Target 9.c)

Goal 10 Reduce inequality (Targets 10.2; 10.3; 10.5; 10.6)

Goal 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive and friendly (Targets 11.3; 11.a)

Goal 12 Promoting responsible consumption (Targets 12.7; 12.8)

Goal 13 Minimize the negative effects of climate change (Target 13.2)

Goal 16 Building peace and justice (Targets 16.1; 16.2; 16.3; 16.5; 16.6; 16.7; 16.9; 16.b)

Goal 17 Strengthen partnerships for development (Targets 17.2; 17.3; 17.5; 17.6; 17.8; 17.9; 17.12; 17.13; 17.16; 17.17; 17.18)

Key Partners:

- Parliament of Mongolia
- Cabinet Secretariat
- Ministry of Digital Development and Communications
- Ministry of Economy and Development
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Justice and Internal Affairs
- National Statistics office
- National Human Right Commission
- National Committee on Gender Equality
- Mongolian Employers' Federation
- Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions
- CSOs
- Asian Development Bank
- European Union
- German Agency for International Cooperation
- International NGOs
- Japan International Cooperation Agency
- Korea International Cooperation Agency
- Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
- United States Agency for International Development
- World Bank

Contributing UN agencies:

FAO, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCAP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV, UN Women, WHO.

Results	Performance Indicators (disaggregation)	Baseline (year)	Target (Cooperation Framework end)	Data source/MoV	Assumptions
Outcome 4 By 2027, policy-making and implementation in Mongolia is more gender-responsive, participatory, coherent, evidence-informed and SDG-aligned; governance institutions at all levels are transparent and accountable; and people, especially the marginalised groups, have access to justice and rule of law for full realization of human rights	4.1 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive [SDGs 16.7.2]	57.1 (2019)	65.8	NSO	The government complies with the international human rights obligations including labour laws National human rights machinery and gender equality institutions, including civil society, are empowered COVID pandemic is contained and there is no further spread of cases There is interest in setting up systems and mechanism to collect disaggregated data and use it for evidence-informed policy-making There is political will to reform public administration There is investment in digital transformation for effective service delivery There is no fiscal crunch that could limit the space for government to provide services
	4.2 Proportion of population who personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law, by type of rights (SDGs 16.b.1 a)	17.7 (2019)	Lower than baseline percentage* (* there is no national target for this indicator)	NSO	
	16.b.14.2 (a) Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law	4.5 (2019)	Higher than baseline percentage* (* there is no national target for this indicator)	NSO	
	4.3 Rule of law index	45.67 (rank) (2020) -0.26 (value) (2020)	Higher than baseline* (* there is no national target for this indicator)	World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators	
	4.4. Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliament and (b) local governments	(a) 17% (2020) (b) 27% (2020)	(a) 24.6% (2024) (b) 37.4% (2024)	NSO, NDA	
	4.5 Corruption Perception Index	35 (value) (2020) 111 (rank) (2020)	38 94[21]	Transparency International https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/mng	
	4.6 Youth Development Index (overall score)	0.758 (2020)	Higher than baseline* (* there is no national target for this indicator)	The global Youth Development Index (YDI) and Report https://youth-development-index.thecommonwealth.org/	

[21] The latest (2020) Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranked overall 35 points out of 100, placing Mongolia at 111th ranking. The Cabinet is aiming to improve Mongolia's ranking in the CPI below 100 by 2023. Based on the estimation of Mongolia's ranking of 100th by 2023, if the ranking is decreased by 2 points per year, then in 2027, Mongolia's CPI will be ranked 94th. According to the CPI 2020, countries are ranked 94th if they meet the 38/100-point criteria.Retrieved from https://legalinfo.mn/mn/detail?lawId=16231084041711; https://montsame.mn/mn/read/269824; https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/mng

Output 4.1 The capacity of judicial institutions, National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia and civil society is improved to protect, promote, and monitor human rights of all including the vulnerable population groups including labour rights

[UN entities: ILO, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UN WOMEN, WHO]

Output 4.2 Improved mechanisms and processes in place to effectively prevent and respond to violence and harassment against women and children, persons with disabilities, and human trafficking and promote gender equality, through frequent policy reviews , rigorous advocacy and outreach.

[UN entities: FAO, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC]

Output 4.3 National and sub-national stakeholders' capacities improved, including through digital transformation, to deliver services in a transparent, people-centred, efficient and effective manner; make coherent evidence-informed policy-making, monitoring, and reporting; and enable citizen participation in decision-making and empower them to hold authorities accountable

[UN entities: FAO, ITU, OHCHR, UNDP UNESCAP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV]

Output 4.4 Improved representation and participation of women and young people in elections, and local decision-making institutions including through civil society, youth councils and women's and young people's networks

[UN entities: OHCHR, UNDP, UNFPA]

ANNEX 2:

THE LEGAL ANNEX TO THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

This Legal Annex refers to the cooperation or assistance agreements or other agreements that are the already existing legal basis for the relationship between the Government of Mongolia and each UN organization supporting the country to deliver on the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2023-2027).

Whereas the Government of Mongolia (hereinafter referred to as "the Government") has entered into the following relationships:

a) "With the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a basic agreement to govern UNDP's assistance to the country was signed by the Government and UNDP (the "Standard Basic Assistance Agreement" or "SBAA") on 28 September 1976. This Cooperation Framework, together with a joint results group work plan specifying UNDP programme activities further to this Cooperation Framework (which shall form part of this Cooperation Framework and is incorporated herein by reference), constitute together a "project document" as referred to in the SBAA. The implementing partner and UNDP will sign a project agreement containing the specific arrangements for each project further to the relevant project document."

b) With the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) a Basic Cooperation Agreement (BCA) concluded between the Government of Mongolia and UNICEF on 8 February 1994.

c) With the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the agreement concluded between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government of Mongolia on 28 September 1976 (the "Basic Agreement") mutatis mutandis applies to the activities and personnel of UNFPA, in accordance with the agreement (concluded by an exchange of letters) between UNFPA and the Government of Mongolia, which entered into force on 27 August 1999.

d) With the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the provisions of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement concluded between the United Nations Development Programme and the Government of Mongolia, signed and entered into force on 28 September 1976, shall be applied, mutatis mutandis, to UNIDO present project in Mongolia."

e) With the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Agreement between the Government of Mongolia and FAO concluded by exchange of letters signed by FAO on 11 August 2008 and by the Government of Mongolia on 26 August 2008.

f) With the International Organization for Migration (IOM) the Cooperation Agreement concluded between the Government of Mongolia and IOM on 24 November 2010.

g) With the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat), the SBAA signed between the Government of Mongolia and UNDP applies mutatis mutandis.

h) With the International Labour Organization (ILO), the 1947 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies and its Annex I, to which the Government acceded on 3 March 1970, and the Agreement concerning technical assistance concluded by the Government and the ILO, among other specialized agencies, on 24 May 1963.

i) With the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Basic Agreement was signed between the Government of Mongolia and WHO, on 15 June 1968.

j) With the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation was signed between the Government of Mongolia and UNESCO on 20 February 2017.

k) The participation of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the Cooperation Framework will be in accordance with its mandate established by the General Assembly resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993.

l) Ratification of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies of 21 November 1947.

For all agencies[22]: Assistance to the Government shall be made available and shall be furnished and received in accordance with the relevant and applicable resolutions and decisions of the competent UN system agency's governing structures.

The COOPERATION FRAMEWORK will, in respect of each of the United Nations system agencies signing, be read, interpreted, and implemented in accordance with and in a manner, that is consistent with the basic agreement between such United Nations system agency and the Host Government, as set out above.

The Government will honour its commitments in accordance with the provisions of the cooperation and assistance agreements outlined in paragraph on the Basis of the Relationship.

Without prejudice to these agreements, the Government shall apply the respective provisions of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (the "General Convention") or the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies (the "Specialized Agencies Convention") to the Agencies' property, funds, and assets and to their officials and experts on mission. The Government shall also accord to the Agencies and their officials and to other persons performing services on behalf of the Agencies, the privileges, immunities, and facilities as set out in the cooperation and assistance agreements between the Agencies and the Government. In addition, it is understood that all United Nations Volunteers shall be assimilated to officials of the Agencies, entitled to the privileges and immunities accorded to such officials under the General Convention or the Specialized Agencies Convention.

The Government will be responsible for dealing with any claims, which may be brought by third parties against any of the Agencies and their officials, experts on a mission or other persons performing services on their behalf and shall hold them harmless in respect of any claims and liabilities resulting from operations under the cooperation and assistance agreements, except where it is mutually agreed by Government and a particular Agency that such claims and liabilities arise from gross negligence or misconduct of that Agency, or its officials, advisors or persons performing services.

Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the Government shall insure or indemnify the Agencies from civil liability under the law of the country in respect of vehicles provided by the Agencies but under the control of or use by the Government.

(a) "Nothing in this COOPERATION FRAMEWORK shall imply a waiver by the UN or any of its Agencies or Organizations of any privileges or immunities enjoyed by them or their acceptance of the jurisdiction of the courts of any country over disputes arising of this Agreement".

(b) Nothing in or relating to this document will be deemed a waiver, expressed or implied, of the privileges and immunities of the United Nations and its subsidiary organs, including WFP, whether under the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 13th February 1946, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies of 21st November 1947, as applicable, and no provisions of this document or any Institutional Contract or any Undertaking will be interpreted or applied in a manner, or to an extent, inconsistent with such privileges and immunities.

[22] ITC, ITU, UNAIDS, UNCTAD, UNDRR, UNEP, UNESCAP, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV, UNWOMEN.

ANNEX 3:
PROGRAMME AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Programme Implementation

The programme will be nationally executed under the overall co-ordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia. Government Ministries, NGOs, INGOs and UN system agencies will implement programme activities. The COOPERATION FRAMEWORK[23] will be made operational through the development of joint work plan(s) (JWPs)[24] and/or agency-specific work plans and project documents as necessary which describe the specific results to be achieved and will form an agreement between the UN system agencies and each implementing partner as necessary on the use of resources. To the extent possible the UN system agencies and partners will use the minimum documents necessary, namely the signed COOPERATION FRAMEWORK and signed joint or agency-specific work plans and project documents to implement programmatic initiatives. However, as necessary and appropriate, project documents can be prepared using, inter alia, the relevant text from the COOPERATION FRAMEWORK and joint or agency-specific work plans and / or project documents[25].

Travel Costs

Cash assistance for travel, stipends, honoraria and other costs shall be set at rates commensurate with those applied in the country, but not higher than those applicable to the United Nations system (as stated in the ICSC circulars).

Cash Transfer Modalities

Where relevant, the UN and the Government have initiated the process required for applying the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT). The stipulations below apply to the UN agencies – UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP – that make direct cash transfers to implementing partners.

All cash transfers to an Implementing Partner are based on the Work Plans (WPs[26]) agreed between the Implementing Partner and the UN system agencies.

Cash transfers for activities detailed in work plans (WPs) can be made by the UN system agencies using the following modalities:

1. Cash transferred directly to the Implementing Partner:
   a. Prior to the start of activities (direct cash transfer), or
   b. After activities have been completed (reimbursement);
2. Direct payment to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by the Implementing Partners on the basis of requests signed by the designated official of the Implementing Partner;
3. Direct payments to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by UN system agencies in support of activities agreed with Implementing Partners.

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[23] United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2023-2027)
[24] As per the UNDG Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for countries adopting the "Delivering as One" approach.
[25] In the case of UNDP, the Government Coordinating Authority will nominate the Government Co-operating Agency directly responsible for the Government's participation in each UNDP-assisted workplan. The reference to "Implementing Partner(s)" shall mean "Executing Agency(s)" as used in the SBAA. Where there are multiple implementing partners identified in a workplan, a Principal Implementing Partner will be identified who will have responsibility for convening, coordinating and overall monitoring (programme and financial) of all the Implementing Partners identified in the workplan to ensure that inputs are provided and activities undertaken in a coherent manner to produce the results of the workplan.
[26] Refers to results Groups' or agency specific annual, bi-annual or multiyear work plans

Direct cash transfers shall be requested and released for programme implementation periods not exceeding three months. Reimbursements of previously authorized expenditures shall be requested and released quarterly or after the completion of activities.

The UN system agencies shall not be obligated to reimburse expenditure made by the Implementing Partner over and above the authorized amounts. Following the completion of any activity, any balance of funds shall be refunded or programmed by mutual agreement between the Implementing Partner and the UN system agencies.

Cash transfer modalities, the size of disbursements, and the scope and frequency of assurance activities may depend on the findings of a review of the public financial management capacity in the case of a Government Implementing Partner, and of an assessment of the financial management capacity of the non-UN[27] Implementing Partner. A qualified consultant, such as a public accounting firm, selected by the UN system agencies may conduct such an assessment, in which the Implementing Partner shall participate. The Implementing Partner may participate in the selection of the consultant.

Cash transfer modalities, the size of disbursements, and the scope and frequency of assurance activities may be revised in the course of programme implementation based on the findings of programme monitoring, expenditure monitoring and reporting, and audits.

In case of direct cash transfer or reimbursement, the UN system agencies shall notify the Implementing Partner of the amount approved by the UN system agencies and shall disburse funds to the Implementing Partner in 30 days.

In case of direct payment to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by the Implementing Partners on the basis of requests signed by the designated official of the Implementing Partner; or to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by the UN system agencies in support of activities agreed with Implementing Partners, the UN system agencies shall proceed with the payment within 30 days.

The UN system agencies shall not have any direct liability under the contractual arrangements concluded between the Implementing Partner and a third party vendor.

Where the UN system agencies and other UN system agency provide cash to the same Implementing Partner, programme monitoring, financial monitoring and auditing will be undertaken jointly or coordinated with those UN system agencies.

A standard Fund Authorization and Certificate of Expenditures (FACE) report, reflecting the activity lines of the work plan (WP), will be used by Implementing Partners to request the release of funds, or to secure the agreement that [UN organization] will reimburse or directly pay for planned expenditure. The Implementing Partners will use the FACE to report on the utilization of cash received. The Implementing Partner shall identify the designated official(s) authorized to provide the account details, request and certify the use of cash. The FACE will be certified by the designated official(s) of the Implementing Partner.

Cash transferred to Implementing Partners should be spent for the purpose of activities and within the timeframe as agreed in the work plans (WPs) only.

[27] For the purposes of these clauses, "the UN" includes the IFIs.

Cash received by the Government and national NGO Implementing Partners shall be used in accordance with established national regulations, policies and procedures consistent with international standards, in particular ensuring that cash is expended for activities as agreed in the work plans (WPs), and ensuring that reports on the utilization of all received cash are submitted to [UN organization] within six months after receipt of the funds. Where any of the national regulations, policies and procedures are not consistent with international standards, the UN system agency financial and other related rules and system agency regulations, policies and procedures will apply.

In the case of international NGO/CSO and IGO Implementing Partners cash received shall be used in accordance with international standards in particular ensuring that cash is expended for activities as agreed in the work plans (WPs), and ensuring that reports on the full utilization of all received cash are submitted to [UN organization] within six months after receipt of the funds.

To facilitate scheduled and special audits, each Implementing Partner receiving cash from [UN organization] will provide UN system agency or its representative with timely access to:

- all financial records which establish the transactional record of the cash transfers provided by [UN system agency], together with relevant documentation;
- all relevant documentation and personnel associated with the functioning of the Implementing Partner's internal control structure through which the cash transfers have passed.

The findings of each audit will be reported to the Implementing Partner and [UN organization]. Each Implementing Partner will furthermore:

- Receive and review the audit report issued by the auditors.
- Provide a timely statement of the acceptance or rejection of any audit recommendation to the [UN organization] that provided cash (and where the SAI has been identified to conduct the audits, add: and to the SAI) so that the auditors include these statements in their final audit report before submitting it to [UN organization].
- Undertake timely actions to address the accepted audit recommendations.

Report on the actions taken to implement accepted recommendations to the UN system agencies (and where the SAI has been identified to conduct the audits, add: and to the SAI), on a quarterly basis (or as locally agreed)

Financial assurance and audit

The Supreme Audit Institution may undertake the audits of Government Implementing Partners. If the SAI chooses not to undertake the audits of specific Implementing Partners to the frequency and scope required by the UN system agencies, the UN system agencies will commission the audits to be undertaken by private sector audit services[28].

[28] Seen through a South-South lens, the capacity assessment process presents an opportunity to identify capacity assets that a particular country could offer to other developing countries and the capacity gaps that could be filled by other developing countries. For UNDP, the audit of NGO or nationally implemented projects can be assigned to the national Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) only on the condition that the institution has a demonstrated capacity to carry out the audits in an independent manner. To this effect, the Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) has made available on its Intranet site guidance on the assessment of SAIs along with a questionnaire that will need to be properly completed, signed and communicated to OAI to support that due diligence has been exercised prior to opting for having such audits undertaken by the national SAI. Please refer to OAI Intranet site for further details.

Resources/resources mobilization strategy

The UN system agencies will provide support to the development and implementation of activities within the Cooperation Framework, which may include technical support, cash assistance, supplies, commodities and equipment, procurement services, transport, funds for advocacy, research and studies, consultancies, programme development, monitoring and evaluation, training activities and staff support. Part of the UN system entities' support may be provided to non-governmental [and civil society] organizations as agreed within the framework of the individual workplans and project documents.

Additional support may include access to UN organization-managed global information systems, the network of the UN system agencies' country offices and specialized information systems, including rosters of consultants and providers of development services, and access to the support provided by the network of UN specialized agencies, funds and programmes. The UN system agencies shall appoint staff and consultants for programme development, programme support, technical assistance, as well as monitoring and evaluation activities.

Subject to annual reviews and progress in the implementation of the programme, the UN system agencies' funds are distributed by calendar year and in accordance with the Cooperation Framework. These budgets will be reviewed and further detailed in the workplans and project documents. By mutual consent between the Government and the UN development system entities, funds not earmarked by donors to UN development system agencies for specific activities may be re-allocated to other programmatically equally worthwhile activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Implementing Partners agree to cooperate with the UN system agencies for monitoring all activities supported by cash transfers and will facilitate access to relevant financial records and personnel responsible for the administration of cash provided by the UN system agencies. To that effect, Implementing Partners agree to the following:

1. Periodic on-site reviews and spot checks of their financial records by the UN system agencies or their representatives, as appropriate, and as described in specific clauses of their engagement documents/ contracts with the UN system agencies'

2. Programmatic monitoring of activities following the UN system agencies' standards and guidance for site visits and field monitoring,

Special or scheduled audits. Each UN organization, in collaboration with other UN system agencies (where so desired and in consultation with the respective coordinating Ministry) will establish an annual audit plan, giving priority to audits of Implementing Partners with large amounts of cash assistance provided by the UN system agencies, and those whose financial management capacity needs strengthening.